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THE RED BOOKS OF TALBOT HOUSE

Members often ask the question "Who has the right to call himself a Foundation Member of Toc H?" The answer, strictly speaking, is that only those men whose names are recorded on the registers of Talbot House in Poperinghe are so qualified. The main body of such names consisted of the signatures of communicants in the Upper Room, at first in the two Red Books here described, and later on printed slips. But even so, more than half this record has been lost, as Tubby now relates in the article which follows. In practice, therefore, any member who used the Old House during the War, whether documentary evidence of his coming exists or not, can and does wear the honourable title of Foundation Member, and everyone gladly takes his word for it.

THE time has come when something must be said about the two Red Books preserved since 1922 in the safe of All Hallows. Here they have as their companion volumes, registers which have survived the chances and changes of English history for many centuries; and I sincerely trust that these Red Books, together with the tin despatch box of like character, containing other early documents of Talbot House at Poperinghe, may remain where they are now deposited for many generations.

It would be hard to say when it exactly was that we began to think that documents concerning Talbot House were really worth retention. The general influence of Active Service was hostile to careful record-making. We lived from day to day most literally; and St. Francis, who condemned amusingly the provident anxiety displayed by bees and squirrels as an immoral lack of confidence in God, would have found little to condemn in the care-free spirit of the Armies in Flanders.

Yet in a way I cannot now define, there was from the first opening of Talbot House in Poperinghe an undercurrent of conviction that something was beginning which deserved a system of record. It was no afterthought that Talbot House would need its Register; and, while most Padres kept their lists of men so far as they were able, it was especially true of Talbot House that signatures were constantly requested. Two books were therefore kept from the beginning. First a small green copy-book which was signed by fifteen hundred officers in all. Opposite their pencilled signatures occurred the date of their coming, and sometimes the figure of a donation made to the finances of the House.

This Officers' Book had a strange history. Those who signed it were the officers coming and going on leave, or for other reasons spending a night in Talbot House, where they slept thankfully on stretchers on the landing below the

Upper Room. This night hostel work grew so big that it was transferred in May, 1916, to the present Skindles, which had hitherto been for some months the Headquarters of the Guards' Division. The first feature of the new arrangement was that Neville Talbot was to live there, and do for officers what Talbot House was doing mainly for the men. Soon afterwards, however, Neville was moved to the Somme, and became Chaplain General to the 5th Army, the house which he was to have inspired became the Officers' Club under Padre C. E. Ensell (now of Lewes Town), Major Dulken, and Sergt.-Major Hutton. When all this took place, the Officers' Green Book in Talbot House was almost full. It was not transferred, but remained with us as a legacy. It came home safely to Knutsford, and then down to London. From time to time it was consulted, but, alas! never copied. Before the opening of the Empire Exhibition, some of our friends there came to me with the proposition that certain of our relics should be shown. Eager as we then were to make the most of this opportunity, I can remember handling the old Green Book with tenderness, and wondering whether it was really safe to let it go into the vast vortex of Wembley. My avarice, or my pride, then overcame my caution. The book was duly sent, duly exhibited, but never seen again. I almost wept over the loss of it; due doubtless to the fact that I had not insured it, or taken due precautions. Thus perished at a blow the actual signatures of almost all the officers who had used Talbot House throughout 1915, '16 and part of '17.

Tragic though this must be, it is not so important to the main history of the early Movement as is the joyful fact that in the two Red Books are the names, and in many cases the signatures, of some three thousand officers and men; for the signatures of those in the Green Book were merely of officers who used Talbot House as a convenient resting-place for a night, whereas the names enshrined in these two volumes are all of them, or almost all of them, the names of men who made their Communion in the Upper Room.

It should here be observed that, since the word "Sacrament" means a pledge, soldier's oath of fidelity, it is not unreasonable to require that communicants should at least sign their names. While the old Prayer Book ruling that intending communicants should notify their names to the curate is everywhere obsolete, there is a good deal to be said for asking for the names afterwards and having the list preserved. I have often felt that this corollary to Communion is by no means otiose or unwise. In the case of Talbot House, there was, of course, a different reason for it. Men signed their names in silence for the most part, realising as they did so that this might be the last occasion when they would attest the great solemnity which they had just experienced.

The Red Book, or (on days of a great multitude) separate sheets of paper, lay on the table on the second landing below the Chapel staircase. Officers and men gathered round this table and subscribed their signatures, as they came down from the Upper Room. While they were doing this after the Celebration, I would often follow them down the companion ladder and stand there talking to this man or that, or shake hands at the top of the staircase leading to the first floor, with old friends and new. That final handshake was once more a peculiarly homely and English way of expressing the human counterpart of the Divine

Gift which the right hand of the Celebrant had recently administered, and the right hand of the communicant received. With these Red Books once more before me to-night, I seem to be able to picture across the span of years the scene as though it were but yesterday ; and my eyes dwell on many of these men whose writing lies before me.

Their names stand early on the greatest role of men-communicants which the Church of England has ever possessed. It goes on still, I hope, in every Mark throughout the world, and many of the Branches.

A practical point, however, breaks in on my reverie. The student will enquire how it has come to be that only some three thousand signatures, or names copied in later by Cecil Vokins (now of Toc H Dorking) or Trower, survive. The answer is twofold. First, we must recognise that many men, some of the very best, were far too shy to sign their names. They were unused to doing so in any Church, or they were in a hurry ; or they just felt, without a definite reason, that they would leave it where it stood and let the others sign who fancied it. The only way of getting Englishmen to accept an innovation is to assure them that it is an old custom now to be revived. There was another reason later on. Those students who remember the Pyx of Talbot House was given by the poor of Buxton Street in Portsea (as the inscription upon it indicates), may be interested to connect this fact with a series of gifts of very great simplicity which came until the end of 1917 from the children of the Portsea Sunday Schools. These children set to work to provide Talbot House with a great number of tiny metal Crucifixes, moulded with great simplicity and costing only a few pence each. They furnished these with serviceable thread, and sent them out a hundred at a time. These were then given to the Communicants of Talbot House (if they were desirous to have them) as from the children. They received as well a little printed slip which fortunately recorded not only their Army unit, but also their home address. It was this forethought of the home address which really made a *first* beginning of Toc H in the Empire possible. Without these home addresses, it would have been impossible to get in touch with the scattered members of the Old House, for the signatures in the Red Book often did not equip us with this knowledge. It would indeed be almost true to say that the future of Toc H was assured to it by the gift from the children of those tiny Crucifixes. Many no doubt were lost ; but one was lent in 1925 by a Foundation Member in Manchester to travel round the world in Pat's safe keeping. It came back securely to its owner, and is to be left by will to Manchester Toc H.

The note here jotted down may guide the thoughts of those who see it subsequently, and wonder why such a frail and almost worthless little white metal Crucifix could be so valuable.

This is a strange place for a bitter word ; but one must follow, although reluctantly. In the end of 1917 Miss Kidd, the Superintendent of the Infants' Sunday School at Portsea, was compelled to write to Talbot House and to break



to me news typical of much that was then happening. The Ministry of Munitions having by now been greatly speeded up, and having taken over for the time being the entire metal supply of Great Britain, insisted, we were told, that ornamental work of every kind must cease. As a result it now became impossible to get these tiny Crosses made at all. The metal was too precious! The metal in a single shell would have made all, or nearly all, these little symbols of salvation, which ceased to be bestowable!

TALBOT HOUSE CHAPEL (C of E)	
Communicants' Roll	
Communicants are asked to fill in this paper & leave it for entry on the Register, which has now been kept practically complete for two years.	
Name <u>Dorothy France</u>	No. _____
Rank <u>Junior Sister</u>	Rt. <u>2nd Lt. M.S.R.</u>
Home Address <u>Talbot House, Warham, Wells</u>	
<u>Wiltshire</u> P. R. CLAYTON, Chaplain	
TALBOT HOUSE CHAPEL (C of E)	
Communicants' Roll	
Communicants are asked to fill in this paper and leave it for entry on the Register, which has now been kept practically complete for two years.	
No. _____	Name <u>Eliza J. W. Marlowe</u>
RANK _____	Rt. <u>7th Lt.</u>
Home Address <u>The Elms, Hockford</u>	
P. R. CLAYTON, Chaplain	

Two Communicants' slips.

obtained because the dies and stamps which issued them were laid aside in order to augment the awful processes of war.

Meanwhile, what happened to the little slips which bore the signatures and home addresses? When they were signed, they were ensconced in two unworthy sand-bags in my cupboard. Sand-bags were used for almost anything; and when Lord Northcliffe's department of Allied publicity tried to flood Talbot House with their literature, this was also ensconced in sand-bags, and some of these were also piled into my cupboard. A few weeks later, after Kemmel fell, and life became still more precarious, we were compelled to build a rampart of sandbags across the marble step in the front part of the House. This rampart was constructed rapidly with sandbags taken from my cupboard, as if they contained something more solid than mere propaganda pamphlets. One sand-bag full of our Communicants' Roll paper was, by a desperate oversight, built into this rampart and never recovered. Perhaps two thousand signatures were lost therein. At the Armistice the other sandbag was brought home and its contents extracted; with the result that several hundreds of these signatures were available for sorting. Some of them are now framed and hang in club rooms in all parts of the world. I took a number out to Canada in 1922, and in 1925 a number to Australia; but in 1926 my old despatch case was stolen from a public hall in Sheffield and thrown by a disappointed thief into the river, and many overseas signature-slips, dating from 1916-17, were thus lost finally.

Therefore, once more I trust that these Red Books will long remain in all their primitive simplicity in the old safe, and have the company of documents which are their seniors by some centuries, but are not in truth more venerable. In the same safe, among the priceless Plate which has come down from the time, if not from the hands, of Archbishop Laud, stands the original Chalice and Paten of Talbot House in Poperinghe, which are in actual fact my property, left to me by an Oxford uncle who died early in the war. I had these sent out to Poperinghe in 1916, and they were used henceforth, the Army Chalice now in use at Mark II preceded this gilt chalice in use upon the Carpenter's Bench for the Christmas Communion of 1915, when over 500 of the London Rifle Brigade and a great number of the Queen's Westminster Rifles made their Communion in the Upper Room, led thither by their Chaplains, Crisford (now of Leeds) and Reed Aberdare Toc H), two men to whom my debt is incalculable.

Lastly, those who turn over the pages of the Red Books with circumspection may be surprised to find the name of St. Martin-in-the-Field occurring. This was indeed the *first* attempted dedication of the Upper Room in Talbot House. It was an instinctive tribute to the position which "Dick Sheppard's Church" had already come to occupy in 1915 in the minds of all who loved the Church of Christ in Flanders. It will be noticed that the word "Field" was singular in Talbot House in Poperinghe. Anyone who reads the later narrative of the beginning of Toc H will not need to be told that St. Martin's was the first of London Churches to welcome and assist the early Movement in 1919 and 1920 and beyond. I went to Dick again and again for help, advice, and encouragement, and never came away without all three. At our first interview after the war was ended, he told me that he had for years been praying for Toc H in Poperinghe, and that he was convinced its work must continue. I should indeed be faithless to forget the deep effect which this pronouncement had upon me. I felt, in the words of Bunyan, that a "comforting time was come."

TUBBY.

A PADRE'S REPORT

The shades of Thomas Hood and of the anonymous author of "It was his cough that carried him off ; it was his coffin they carried him off in" clearly stood godfathers to the padre of Port Elizabeth (South Africa) who, having failed to reach the Branch meeting, produced his annual report for 1930-31 in the following form. If some of the local references are lost on us, the whole spirit of the thing will "get across" to members everywhere. It goes with a bang and such a report surely ought to come from a canon's mouth

DEAR BLOKES,

I MUST make a most humble apology,
But the nag I arrive on has turned out a hollow gee ;
It has carried me swiftly as far as my church,
When the petrol ran out and left me in the lurch.
That a padre should *nag* is expected, of course ;
I trust that my nagging won't render *me* horse.

As I halt at the nek of the pass and look round,
I try to *discover* if we've *covered* ground.

Very briefly I'll try now to *review* the view,
And pass, in a sentence, my sentence on you.
And the first thing I see, as I mop my brow clammily,
Is this, that we've really grown into a family.
I read and write letters ; through P.E. I roam ;
But to enter the Toc H room's like coming home.
I feel it, *you* feel it ; we know we belong ;
And visitors feel it, unless I'm far wrong.

The next thing is this, which we need not repent,
That we're all of us dead keen to "pay up our rent."
We have come "Toc H jobs" to interpret with latitude ;
But we have, if not "jobs," got the job-finding attitude.
We have to our credit some useful achievement,
Some jobs which were brothers in need to relieve meant ;
They mayn't be all jammy—then treacle we'll pour,
And like Oliver Twist, we'll be asking for more.
If brimstone's mixed up with it, health's in the mixture ;
And stickers we'll prove, for no doubt treacle sticks t'yer.

But the view's not all sunlight, and patches of shade
As I look o'er the landscape are clearly displayed.
The family's closed ; propagation has stopped ;
We christen no babies ; the birth-rate has dropped.
Now this state of affairs in a nation is serious ;
And the want of the weans ought to worry and weary us.
We *must* try to discover some new propaganda,
Not sit, like poor whites, on the shady verandah
And smoke and *hoop more sal alles reg wees* :*
Without propaganda we'll prove proper geese.

The next patch of gloom is, we're much of a muchness ;
All British, but lacking South African Dutchness.
The remedy may not be easy to find,
But we'll not be content while our content's confined
To but half of the nation we're trying to make :
If you leave out the milk you can't have a milk-shake.

Still I think on the whole we have held up our banner
In a not altogether unspirited manner.
I won't say more than this, that you keep it a-flutter.
(For I'm much too well *bred* to give you any *butter*.)
I commend you, dear blokes, to the great Elder Brother,
Whose rule's very simple, just—"Love one another."
We've learnt it at home ; we'll show it abroad,
In glad humble service, which none need applaud.
But the glory be His, Whom we serve to the end,
Example, Companion, Redeemer and Friend.

Your affectionate Padre, NOEL TARRANT

* We guess this means "hope for the best" in the Afrikaans tongue.—ED.

A WIRELESS PHANTASY

AT last it was finished, the set that I had spent months in designing. It was only an unexpected windfall that enabled me to put my theories into practice, and build the set of my dreams. I had spent the evening celebrating and touring the continent, and it had more than fulfilled my hopes, although careful handling was necessary to get the finest results.

Now for the final and most important test; would she work on the short waves—those elusive frequencies at which any fault is magnified and any slight error means great loss of efficiency? I switched over to the necessary coils, and gently started searching—yes. At exactly the reading I had calculated I heard the announcer at 3 LO Melbourne, Australia, signing off at 6 a.m. on a fine winter's morning. I glanced at the clock—it was 8 p.m. So I was listening to to-morrow morning, and that cheery soul who had been speaking just now was starting another day's work, while I had a night's rest to come, that is, if I could tear myself away from this set of sets. Now for another part of the world. A slightly higher reading of the dials, and I caught a faint voice, "2XAF, General Electric Station, Schenectady," announcing a dinner-time programme from an hotel in New York.

It seems strange how these short waves make a fool of a clock. I listened for a short while, idly turning over in my mind what would have happened to me if I could be transported complete with my set three hundred years back. Undoubtedly I should have burnt for witchcraft, except for the fact that there were no transmitting stations then, which would probably have saved me. I hung on to New York for a few minutes, but fading was troublesome, and I decided to wait until darkness had fallen across the Atlantic, when conditions would be favourable for a really good bag of Yank stations. I switched back to the local station, some forty miles distant, where a talk on seventeenth century literature was in progress. I filled my pipe and settled myself comfortably in my chair, prepared to wait and listen until such times as there were fresh worlds to conquer.

What fine old chaps those old writers seem to have been, no beating about the bush, straight to the point every time, and what judges of character! The room seemed close, so I walked out on to the verandah, leaving the door open, and stood for a minute or two gazing at the hills, quiet and friendly in the dusk of a summer evening. The smell of wood smoke brought back memories of other times, other places, and as I strolled back to my chair my mind was full of days which were certainly not quiet, but when one knew the meaning of comradeship.

An organ recital was coming through now. I *must* have been day-dreaming, for I awakened with a start at the sound of a footstep on the verandah and a moment later a man strode into the room and came to a standstill as if bewildered:

"Your pardon, good sir, for my intrusion," he said, "but as I passed I thought I heard music such as is only heard in the great churches in the land."

At that moment the announcer's voice broke in to the effect that we were being taken over to the Piccadilly Hotel for dance music until midnight.

"Good night, everybody, good night." The stranger gasped and for the moment I thought he was going to make a bolt to the open air. I reached for the switch, and there was silence.

"I heard a voice," he stammered, "yet you seem to be alone."

"It was only the wireless," I answered. There was no reply.

"Radio," I tried, thinking that he might be a trans-Atlantic visitor.

"I fear your speech is beyond my understanding," he said slowly. It was then that I noticed something queer about him. His clothes were curious; perhaps he had been to a fancy-dress show, and his car had broken down, but he wore them as if they belonged to him, and not in the self-conscious manner of the average male in fancy dress. However, whether he was a queer chap or not, he was just what I wanted, an audience to whom I could demonstrate the superb qualities of my handiwork. So bidding him take a seat, I made for the outsize cupboard attached to the back of my bungalow, which the agent had described as a commodious kitchenette, and a moment later returned with a couple of bottles of the Great Stuff complete with the necessary tankards.

While I was dispensing the refreshments, I noticed my visitor was peering at my copy of Edgar Wallace's latest which lay on the table. I enquired if he was keen on reading, and in a sonorous voice he replied:

"A good book is balm unto the soul of both reader and writer."

There was something about the intonation of his words that reminded me of old Dr. Brown, whose sermons used to accompany my first efforts of drawing express engines in the back of hymn-books. I placed a glass of beer at his elbow, which he accepted with a courteous gesture, and I settled myself in my chair, eager to show what could be done with my new toy.

"I am glad you blew in," I commenced, "for I was just waiting to get into touch with America with this new effort of mine, and an admiring audience makes all the difference."

He made no reply but gave me a curious questioning look as if he thought I had escaped from somewhere. So without more ado I turned my chair round and started searching. A few seconds and Schenectady was roaring through on the speaker, a dance band producing some real syncopation with plenty of pep.

"It's indeed a curious sort of heathen music," said my visitor.

"Yes, the latest dance music as performed on the other side of the Atlantic," I replied.

"I see Vanity Fair still holds sway in the world. But tell me, good sir, how is this music made and where does it come from, for I confess I am indeed mystified."

"You are a stranger to this country, I presume," I asked.

"I have not been in these parts for many years; so long indeed that I find everything changed except perhaps the ways of men," said my visitor, "but tell me of this new marvel of yours."

I am not usually of a garrulous nature, but when I start on my pet hobby I can more than hold my own with anybody, so I took him through the theory and practice of transmission and reception as I knew it, and ended up with a

discourse on the unexplained fading on the short wavelength. I glanced at the clock as I finished, and found I had been speaking close on an hour. My visitor during this lecture had produced a well-thumbed note-book from one of his capacious pockets, and had been busy writing. When I concluded, he studied his book in silence for a while, and then exclaimed :

"In spite of your clear explanation there were many words in your discourse which I was not able to understand through lack of knowledge, but if you will bear with me I will read my notes to you to be certain I have gained some idea of the general scheme."

"Certainly," I answered, "carry on."

"I understand that these brave sounds are sent out and can be collected by any person with similar machinery to yours, and that distance is no bar to this great invention."

"That is correct within limits," I remarked.

"But if your handling of the machine is faulty, if it has become dusty, dirty, or otherwise neglected, these glorious sounds are blurred, distorted, and sometimes absent altogether, in spite of the fact that the message is being sent out. Also if powerful sounds are being produced near at hand, it is frequently difficult to hear those farther off, unless your machine has a fine sense, and even if all is right with your machine there are days when distant voices are hard to hear for no reason that is known?"

"That's about it," I replied. He was silent for a moment.

"It is a great wonder, greater than anything ever imagined when I was living here. If I had known of this I could have believed anything." He said this quietly, more to himself than me. He was silent again for a while, pondering. Suddenly his face lighted up and his eyes shone, and he spoke rapidly.

"Had I but known of this I could have made every man in old England, who read my books or heard my voice, believe as he had never believed before. I, sir, was a working tinker from the town of Bedford, a foul-mouthed ruffian. I married a good woman who showed me myself as I had never seen myself before, and, far more than this, she showed me the way to Him who is greater than any. And with much struggling and fierce striving I gained a clearer vision, until the spirit moved me to speak of what I had seen, and to write books, among others one purporting to be the travels of an ordinary man through life in his search for the highest. I have been told that it helped some; I do not know. See you not that you have here a glorious allegory. The voice always there, pervading every distance. Man with his spiritual equipment able to hear if he wishes, but only if that equipment is kept in order. You yourself have told me that you are constantly cleaning and rebuilding in order to hear better. Then, again, you have the loud clear voice at hand drowning that which you are striving to hear, and finally the unaccountable fading of the voice which is a common experience of all men to strive earnestly to listen. Do you not see that you have (and I speak with all reverence) a very working model of the spirit of truth, plain for all to see. I have no doubt that in England now the truth is so firmly rooted that nought could move the people from it. In my time, one

only heard within the range of sight, and it were difficult for any man to bring the mind to think of greater possibilities without the aid of the blind faith. But now, by the means of a mere mechanical contrivance, any man can hear his fellow man in distant lands, and if mere wood and metal can accomplish such a marvel, sure it were impertinence to doubt that flesh and blood cast in the image of its Maker could not perform so great an act?"

He paused, evidently expecting me to reply.

"Yes, quite," I murmured, for I was rather out of my depth, never having looked at it in that light before; "you see, nowadays the tendency is to believe in nothing that cannot be definitely proved; entirely materialistic, in fact."

"Yes, that was ever the way of man, to believe only in what his imperfect senses tell him. But one moment: another point, which makes the analogy all the more remarkable. You told me that the whole basis of this communication depends on the waves in a medium which is not recognisable to the senses, and is only dimly guessed at by your wise men of science. Where is your materialism now?"

I thought it over for awhile. This old chap was certainly no fool, and his very enthusiasm drew me to him.

"We are certain of ether by the results we obtain with our receiving sets," I answered.

"Results," he almost shouted, "exactly. Were you not a possessor of a receiving set, your knowledge of this marvel would depend on what you heard from sets of others. If the results were good you would be convinced; if they were blurred and distorted, you would pass on your way judging it to be a mere child's toy. 'Tis so with those of us who try to follow the spirit of truth. Others are unconvinced because of our inefficient reception. If we had eyes to see and ears to hear, we should see the truth in all things, the very stones would speak." He stopped breathlessly. "Your pardon, sir, but my tongue was ever apt to run away with me when moved, and you were wishing to demonstrate more fully the powers of your machine when I interrupted you with my discourse."

"I have been extremely interested," I replied, "but if you really would care to hear more, I will see what I can get." I was glad of this break in the conversation, for I had been struck by his words, and wanted time to sort the matter out in my head. I turned to the controls, switched on, and started searching. After a while I picked up a station undoubtedly American, but I had some difficulty in tuning it in. In a few moments a woman's voice came through loud and clear:

"We will continue our reading from the book we were studying last week, Chapter xiv. '*Now I saw in my dream that Christian went forth not alone, for there was one whose name was Hopeful*'—"

"*Pilgrim's Progress*," I said, as I turned to my companion. I started as I looked at him, for he was sitting rigid in his chair with such an expression of amazement and joy on his face that I wondered what had happened. Suddenly he spoke:

"My own words, children of my mind echoing throughout the world . . ."

I started to my feet—"Then you are John Bunyan!" I cried.

There was a blinding flash followed by a crash of thunder, and as I awoke with a start in my chair, dawn was creeping over the hills to the accompaniment of a fierce storm. I threw over the earthing switch and sat down to think. Well, I had missed my chance of hearing the American Stations at their best, but I had gained something that I should never forget, and something that will return each time I resume my hobby. I felt sorry for the companion of my dream, as his desire to give that splendid analogy of his to the world was overbearing, and his earnestness was wonderful to behold. That is why I am passing this experience on.

F. R. RAWLINGS.

DISTRICT FAMILY NIGHTS

The following is a result of the confabulations, deliberations and ruminations of a sub-committee of the Eastern District of the London Area. It was not intended for general publication, and is in no way an order inflicted on the long-suffering provinces. Rather is it simply a list of helpful suggestions put forward with a disarming disclaimer of "all responsibility for violence or assault resulting" by its authors. It should be explained that the Sub-District is a rare plant, which at present only flowers in London.

In General

IT has been said that flowers fade and virtues vanish, but a platitude is a joy for ever. Let us commence, therefore, by saying that District Family Nights should be District Family Nights. We place the emphasis on the "District." We feel that it should not be left entirely to one unit to act as hosts to the whole District, but rather that the programme should be arranged by the hosts in co-operation with the District Committee and the District Officers.

We suggest that there should be only two D.F.N.'s a year (excluding the District Camp), and we feel that these should be rather special occasions, to which everyone should strive to come. It is our opinion that a Toc H speaker should figure on the programme of these nights. We further suggest that they should be held in a fixed central position, in order that members may definitely book place, time and date some months beforehand to avoid clashes with Branch and Group Programmes. We particularly advocate a cheery hall. Many of the places in which we meet are dismal to the point of desperation.

We are in favour of there being only two D.F.N.'s a year because we think the District is too large to meet together more often conveniently and advantageously. We strongly recommend that we should concentrate on Sub-District Family Nights. By this means we think strong friendships would be formed between units and between individuals in the Sub-Districts, which would go a tremendous way towards revivifying our District Shows and making them a real inspiration. In Sub-District Shows, too, it should be possible to have controversial Speakers—games—debates—and many more things that cannot really be managed at a District affair. We feel, too, that the main object of our meeting at D.F.N.'s should be the strengthening of our family spirit, and not the introduction of guests. Guests should be introduced to the family in the more intimate atmosphere of Branch and Group meetings.

If, then, these meetings are to be of a family nature, plenty of time should be given for the wagging of chins other than the speaker's. District Shows, we think, should allow time for this at the beginning of the evening—varied, perhaps, by one or two *good* vocal or instrumental items—so that men coming from a distance may arrive without disturbing the speaker. We are of the opinion, however, that Sub-District Shows should kick off promptly at a definitely stated time; if this were done, perhaps the habit might even spread to Branches and Groups. So much in general.

In Particular

We tentatively suggest the idea of Drama! It might be interesting (and certainly amusing) if a few people—preferably from different units—got together and produced a short sketch or skit. Something similar to those done at various Branch and Group Birthdays or at the London Jobmasters' Conference of last summer. Perhaps, too, we could do better with our singing. Our songs are generally the same, and not too well sung at that. It might be useful if each Sub-District came prepared to lead at least one song during the evening. There are many good ones which we don't know. In the days of Dickens it was the custom when men met together to improve the occasion by the telling of tales. We feel this to be an ideal way of drawing men together, and put it forward as a suggestion, though we must confess we have our doubts.

One of the most powerful forces in history has been a table. Whenever a body of men have met together round a table it has been the signal of great events. Ideas flow, opinions change, objectives are set and sometimes reached. We wonder if it would be possible to do something in this direction. Perhaps discussion of some point of mutual interest—each table guided by some worthy host or leader—would prove good fun.

We wish to remark on the menace of the Coffee Pot. It looks bad and it is somewhat disturbing to see two or three fellows walk out in the middle of an item and to hear the splashing of water and the tinkling of cups. In theatricals "noises off" are an essential part of the atmosphere, in a D.F.N. they are merely tantalising.

It is unfortunate that some of our D.F.N.'s in the past have incurred a loss. We feel sure this need not happen as the cost per man really amounts to no more than threepence, and many men give more than this. It might be effective to announce during the evening how much has been spent and how much per man would cover the cost. If a capacious and resounding bucket were placed at the door we feel sure that an entirely adequate response would be made.

In Conclusion

We are sorry to descend to verse,
The prose is bad—the rest is worse;
For it we no excuse can proffer
Which might deter the happy scoffer.

It may perchance evoke a laugh—
More probably will cause a "strafe";
But we implore you yet to stop,
And think a bit ere it you drop.

This problem of our D.F.N.
Is solved by you—not other men.

HIGH—JENKS—PETTS.

AN OLD SAINT'S OUTLOOK

Some in Toc H may recall that in 1925, when I was going up from Sydney to my native state of Queensland, the train pulled up at a wayside station for a ten minutes halt, and I got out. A dog then seized upon my trouser-leg, and, finding that its owner was an old R.C. priest, I said to him: "Father, your dog has got a good nose for heretics." This led right on to an uplifting friendship, and daily intercession for the Movement, bestowed by Father —, a fine old Chaplain with R.C. troops in the Australian Forces. Here are some extracts from a recent letter, showing his penetrating understanding of the true Foundations of Toc H.—TUBBY.

MY DEAR PADRE,

I HAVE just come from a lonely vigil in this quiet country Church of mine, and my thoughts and prayers strayed to you and your work. 'Tis so long since you heard from me, yet you won't need perhaps a reintroduction. Your last letter and papers to me were full of interest and I had every intention of writing to you then. You had just come out of the Stadium after a "longish fight."

You don't want to stand for what would reduce Toc H to mere philanthropy or altruism. The Christian Spirit can be found anywhere: where there is love of the brother the Spirit of God is not far off, but if love of the brothers in Toc H is not meant to be ephemeral the foundations in roots must be where you fought to put them—in Christ.

If Toc H succeeded in nothing else but blazoning across this selfish world of ours the great truth that we may be legitimately excused from any or every injunction of God or men but that of love for one another—then it would have succeeded in its mission. How simple Christ made His Kingdom, and how men and theologies have complicated it! All His Knowledge and Power and Love in the least of His creatures in which He multiplies Himself making it inexcusable for us who refuse Him this vicarious love. You are working from the top downwards and from the bottom upwards. Toc H has the Prince and his stable-boy, it sets machinery in motion that will ensure one thing, at least; this "one thing"—that the Spirit of Love gets a fair deal if no favour—we can only plant and water, but the trouble is disciples get darned tired of the planting and watering. Increase of the unselfish spirit, which is the flower and fruit the Great Gardener looks for, does it not come with every unselfish deed of planting and watering?

If you can leaven the great and learned and wealthy of this great modern Empire with that spirit, and show them in your practical ways of Toc H that their real happiness is in making others happy, not in the flaunting of riches and power and dissipation, you will have done more for the Commonwealth of Nations than all its politicians, statesmen and social economists.

A word about myself. I may be gone from here before I hear from you again. Military Medical Board examined me recently for Total Incapacitation Pension. For last three or four years I have been 100 per cent. unfit. I may have to retire from Active Service, no cure seemingly can be found for these gas wounds. Yet for all the glory of the world I would not exchange one particle of what the Great Jobmaster chooses for me, if only His Good Spirit be given me to help

all suffering members. In obscurity and poverty and absence of creature comforts, one somehow can realise better that there are more enduring honours and riches and joys. Fond remembrance and union of prayers for the Spirit of Him we would worthily love.

Yours in J. C.

THE BOOKSHELF

The Problem of Right Conduct. By CANON PETER GREEN. Longmans, 6s.

Members of Toc H will be among the first to agree that there is a desperate need to-day for hard and clear thinking in matters of conduct. The questions so often asked—why may I not do as I choose? What is right and what is wrong?—do not call forth the answer which we find it easy to give. In *The Problem of Right Conduct* Canon Peter Green has started from first principles and carried us in great detail to practical conclusions. The composition is that of the textbook with no hint of literary style and some of us will not find it easy to read. That in itself will be sufficient to attract Toc H members to read it.

The book's highest commendation is in the writer himself with his long and devoted ministry in the heart of the industrial north. Abstruse points of ethical theory are lit up by human experiences from everyday life. There are many contentious issues in the realm of conduct and some will come to it along a different theological approach from Canon Green. But many will rejoice when he pleads for morality to be considered as "a living and growing thing."

Groups of members in Toc H are often crying out for some field of human activity to explore together. Canon Green's book will provide them with thinking that hurts and discussion which not only illuminates but calls for action in the daily drama of our own lives.

* * * * *

War Against Slums. By T. SPEAKE. Adnitt and Naunton, The Square, Shrewsbury. 2s.

We are glad of the opportunity of mentioning this little book which, by reason of its local publication, may otherwise escape the notice of our readers. The author is Chief Sanitary Inspector of Shrewsbury, and therefore has to face the problems of bad housing at first hand in his day's work. His book is a strong plea to back up "war against slums" by putting "voluntary housing societies in the front line" in a national crusade. He deals simply and clearly with the need to arouse public opinion on housing, with the efforts already being made by the churches and voluntary workers, with the provisions of the Housing Act of 1930, and the powers and responsibilities of municipal bodies, landlords and tenants, with the Octavia Hill system of managing property, etc. Much of this will be news to most readers, and all of it useful. Not the least valuable chapter is the last, which actually comprises about half the book; here Mr. Speake gives a list, with all sorts of information and some most striking pictures, of 55 voluntary housing societies all over the country. Public housing schemes are apt to miss the needs of their very poorest and worst housed citizens, and it is here that voluntary societies have done really gallant service. It is a clear duty of Toc H units to know about such local efforts and to back them by thought, word and deed, wherever possible. This book is an excellent key to the situation.

* * * * *

Let's Help! By SIR CHARLES BRIGHT. Routledge. 4s. 6d.

The author of this "collection of good causes" begins by telling us that he has compiled it as a service to others because he is "debarred by ill-health from life's ordinary activities." He does not aim at making a complete directory of national societies or charitable institutions, for that ground is already covered by various fat year-books. He devotes his space to about fifty "causes" ranging from the League of Nations Union at one end to the Decimal Association at the other, and shows much personal understanding and sympathy, as well as giving useful details. His pages on Toc H are free from the misconceptions common among outside observers.

THE TOC H FESTIVAL IN JUNE

LONDON in June is a very pleasant place. Ask any Londoner and he will tell you about it for hours—lazy Saturday afternoons at the Oval, sunny Sunday church parades in Hyde Park and bathing in the Serpentine round the corner, crowded “Derby” trains to the green Epsom downs, hot pavements and breezy ‘bus-tops, cricket with boys’ clubs on Hampstead Heath, picnics with deer looking on at Hampton Court or up the river, the friendly *Golden Eagle* down to Southend, and sunshine making a brave attempt to break even into City offices.

And this year there will be something added, something which will make it an even pleasanter and more friendly place than usual. The great number of our Family has crowded the Toc H Festival out of December and the Albert Hall, and the first Saturday afternoon in June (the sixth) will see the biggest gathering of Toc H from all over the world assembling in the big hall or on the broad grass terraces of the Crystal Palace. Here is an idea of the programme.

Those who arrive by half-past three will be able to meet on the Terrace in front of the Palace, talk to their friends, and listen to the Band of the Welsh Guards. The THANKSGIVING SERVICE will begin in the Central Hall of the Palace at five. After this there will be a meal for those coming from far and for the rest an ample picnic. Shortly after seven, H.R.H. the Patron will arrive for the unveiling of a Memorial Trophy commemorating the occupation of the Palace throughout the War by the R.N.V.R.; and at 7.30 p.m. the FESTIVAL EVENING will begin with Community Singing. The Patron will speak and he will be followed by a new musical pageant woven round “The Holy Thorn,” written by Barkis and composed by Martin Shaw. Then there will be an interlude, during which the Band of the Welsh Guards will play; and the evening will conclude with the lighting of the Lamps of new Branches by the Patron, and Family Prayers at about a quarter past ten.

On Sunday, June 7, we return to Central London. There will be the usual great corporate COMMUNION SERVICES in the early morning for the various denominations at All Hallows itself and in its neighbourhood. Then breakfast, followed by FESTIVAL PREACHINGS, visits to the Marks, and lunch. In the afternoon, the FAMILY GATHERING will be held in the Royal Agricultural Hall, Islington, which gives ample room and easy access to the main terminal stations.

It is hoped that the Central Hall at the Crystal Palace will afford seating accommodation for all members and probationers of Toc H and L.W.H., and that there will be no need to ration Branches and Groups. First preference in the event of too many applications, however, will be given to members from Overseas and the further parts of the British Isles. In order that members may have a first chance, only a very limited number of seats will be available for friends of members, and these subject to a minimum additional donation of 10s. for each.

And now for the effect upon your budget. It is becoming increasingly difficult to make the Festival self-supporting, and this year the outlay must exceed £2,000. The donations of 2s. are *minimum* contributions, but the entire cost must be found from these, and will need an average of at least 3s. each. There are many members who can afford to contribute more, especially among those who have not heavy travelling expenses. Here are the items to be coped with, not so formidable, after all, if you subtract what your week-end would normally cost you at home: Your fare at the cheapest rate to London and thence to the Crystal Palace (9d. beforehand); your offerings at the Services; Saturday meat-tea 2s., or picnic 1s., Sunday breakfast 1s. 6d., and lunch 2s., total, 5s. 6d., payable in advance; what you can afford for your bed on Saturday night; and finally, the donation to Festival Funds.

Billets will again be provided without a fixed charge to members, but those who can find their own accommodation are encouraged to do so. Others may care to make some contribution to this heaviest item of Festival expenditure which, at 5s. a head, amounts to over £600.

Forms of application are available from the Festival Secretary at Headquarters, 47, Francis Street, S.W.1, and should be returned if possible by April 20.

HOUSES THAT LOVE BUILT

"Well, here's one you won't print, anyway," said the author, who has contributed more than once to these pages already, as he handed the Editor the article which follows. It is printed here, not to spite the author, but for the sake of all readers who rejoice in any phase of Everyman's Story. "But what has it got to do with Toc H?" The thoughtful reader will find his own answer.

THE traveller journeying through England's green and pleasant land is confronted, almost on every side, with the ruins of great buildings—relics of an eventful past. They stand in the towns and in the villages, upon the hilltops and in the valleys remote from human habitation. Of the castles, monuments of the martial splendours of the Feudal Age, the traveller will know that their death-knell was sounded during the great Civil War. His mind will revert to the stirring deeds of the seventeenth century and, maybe, he will muse upon the gallant defence of this or that stronghold until its fall before the onslaught of the redoubtable Oliver Cromwell.

But what of the Abbeys, the Castles of Peace? It is not generally realised that these had lain in ruin full half a century before the birth of the mighty Oliver. No cries of battle echoed from their courtyards and yet, with the castles, they also stand crushed and broken, uplifting their roofless walls to heaven in protest at their utter desolation.

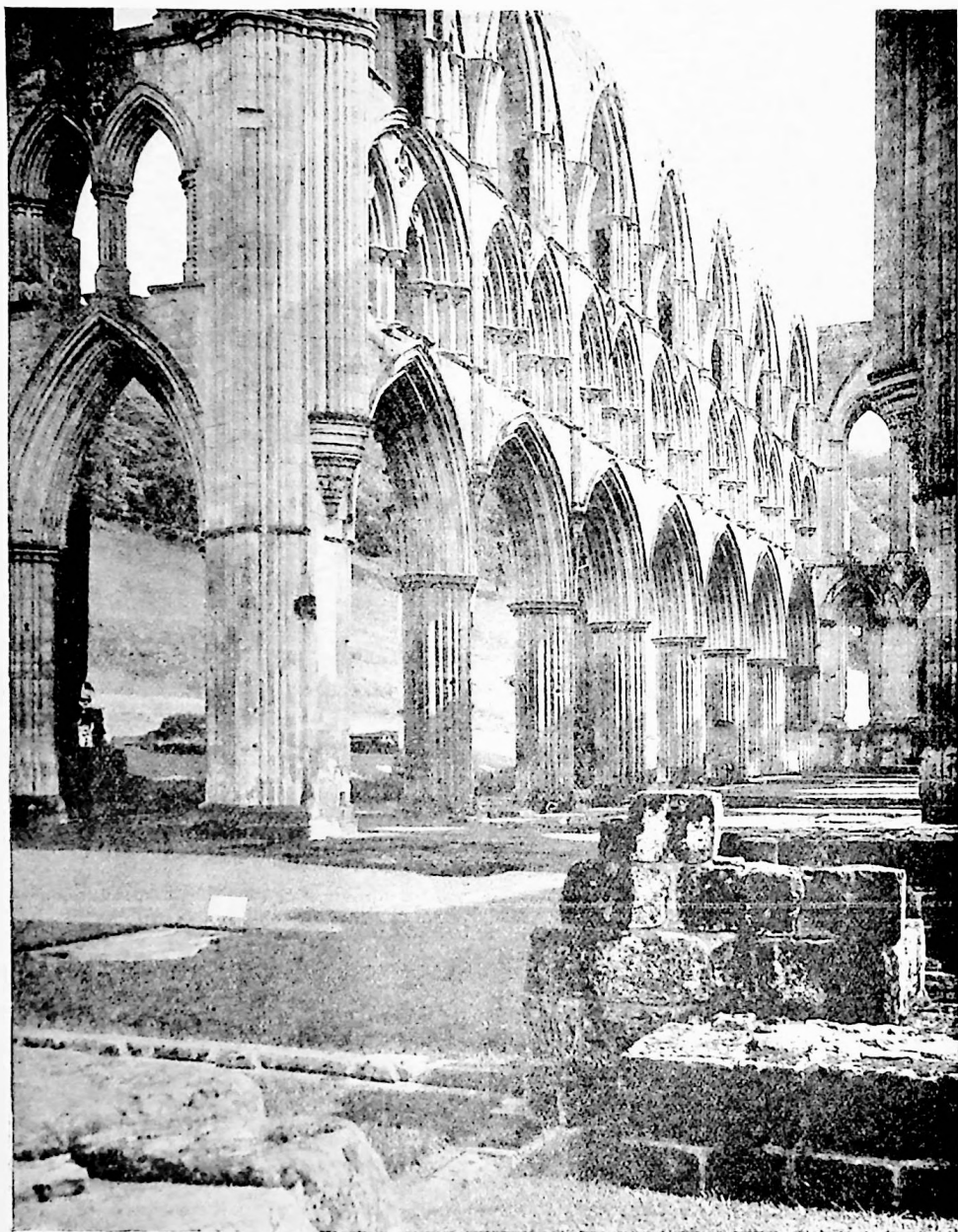
The churches of the Abbeys, in the days of their glory, were resplendent with the finest tapestries, stained glass and carven woodwork; the altar vessels were of gold and silver; the libraries full of ancient books and illuminated manuscripts beyond price. What happened to these priceless treasures at the great dissolution of the sixteenth century? Glass and woodwork were smashed to pieces, carved stonework dashed to the ground, books burnt and manuscripts scattered far and wide. The untold wealth of jewels and precious metals was "delivered unto ye King" to augment the privy purse or squandered in fruitless Continental wars. Thus in a few short years a priceless national heritage was dissipated, and King Henry VIII goes down to history as the author of the greatest pillage in the mediæval era.

As a direct consequence of the dissolution of the monasteries the arts suffered a blow from which they never fully recovered. Architecture declined until the Gothic style became extinct and was replaced by a renaissance of earlier pagan styles. The books and documents lost can never be replaced. The poor of the land lost their guardians, and from this time vagrancy became such a serious problem that, under Elizabeth, the first Poor Laws became necessary. And for what was all this? The monasteries had declined in the sense that their inmates did not live up to the austere standards of early times, but, of the crimes imputed to them, few, if any, seem ever to have been proved. Even of the famous "black book," said to have been laid before the House of Commons, no records remain and it is doubtful whether it ever existed. In the year 1546 an Act of Parliament was passed for the suppression of the smaller monasteries. In this Act it was provided that the dispossessed monks should, if they so wished, be transferred to the larger religious Houses, which were described as "great



*But let my due feet never fail,
 To walk the studious Cloysters pale,
 And love the high embowed Roof,
 With antick Pillars massy proof,
 And storied Windows richly dight,
 Casting a dimm religious light.
 There let the pealing Organ blow,
 To the full voic'd Quire below,
 In Service high, and Anthems clear,
 As may with sweetnes, through mine ear,
 Dissolve me into extasies,
 And bring all Heav'n before mine eyes.*

JOHN MILTON—Il Penseroso.



THE CHOIR OF RIEVAULX ABBEY, YORKSHIRE.

This shows thirteenth-century architecture at its best, and in the foreground part of a nave altar recently unearthed.

and solemn Abbeys " wherein religion was worthily practised. If this were so, it is difficult to understand how they should have fallen so low as their traducers claimed in the short space of a year or so.

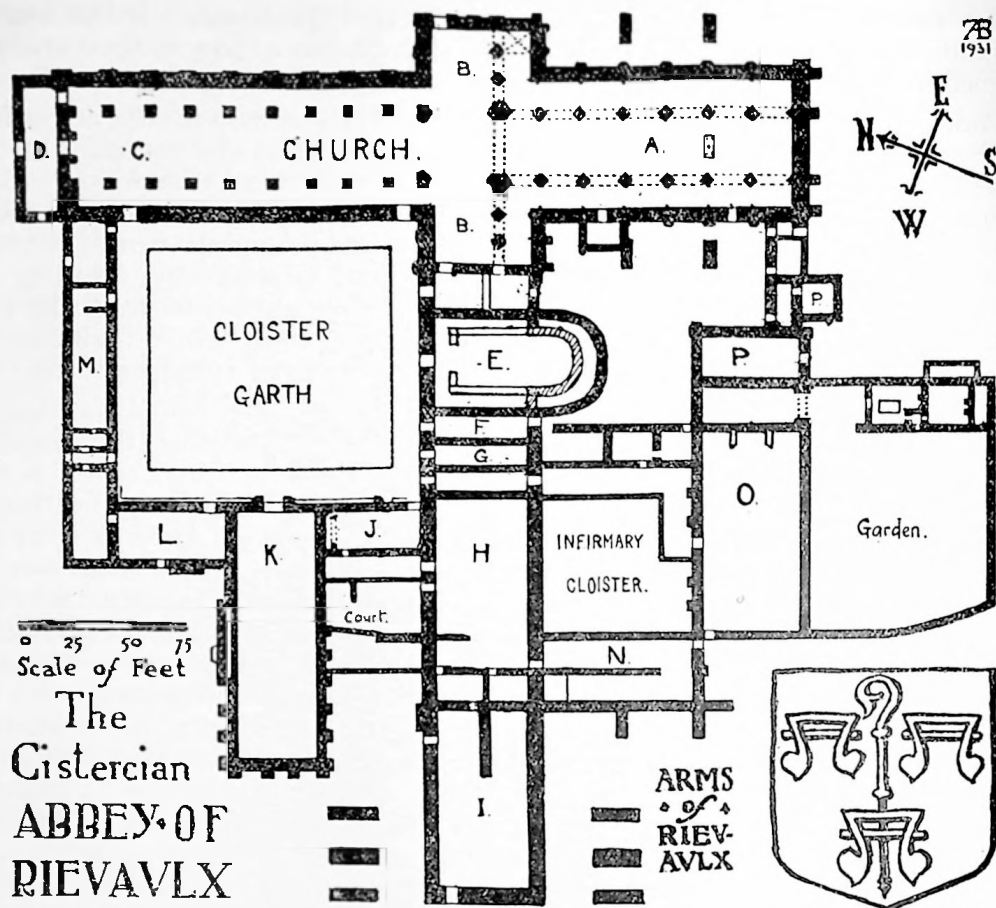
Under royal pressure, most of the English abbeys were voluntarily surrendered by the monks, who received small pensions drawn from the revenues of their sequestrated estates. In some cases, where abbots or monks were said to have been implicated in the great rising known as the Pilgrimage of Grace, the abbeys were dissolved by attainder, their abbots hanged and the monks turned penniless adrift. This fate also befell the great Houses of Glastonbury, Reading and Colchester, which, so far as is known, were the only abbeys to resist the royal will. Refusing to surrender what they held to be a sacred trust, their fate was sealed and their end more bloody than that of their more timid brethren.

For long centuries the cattle and the birds have alone peopled the deserted cloisters and the roofless sanctuaries. In later times, however, the people of this land have begun to see the beauty of these great buildings, even in their utter ruin, and they are now visited by large numbers of pilgrims, who traverse church and chapter house with a deal more reverence than most of their predecessors of the more immediate past. The fame of Tintern, of Rievaulx and of Fountains is world-wide. Few there are of our overseas brethren who visit this country without seeing these or other great ruins and the number of pilgrims from our own people yearly increases. Neither is the Government unappreciative of this return of interest, as may well be seen in their preservation work and careful excavation at Tintern, Rievaulx, Byland, Buildwas, Netley and elsewhere. Cloisters and buildings long buried have been cleared and carpeted with green turf, and the visitor is now able to gain some idea of the entire plan of a mediæval monastery. It is with a view to assisting him in appreciating the significance of these great buildings that these notes are written.

Above all, the Church

Dominating every other building in an abbey was the church. "Seven times a day will I praise Thee," sang the Psalmist, and this was the keynote of western monasticism. St. Benedict, founder of the Benedictine Order from which all the later Orders subsequently sprang, laid down in his Rule that his monks should take the vow of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience, in order that they might the better devote their lives to the praise of God and work among His children. To their church they went seven or more times daily, and thus we may see why they lavished upon it the best that mason, sculptor and artist could give. The church was of great size, the lesser buildings clustering round it as to a mother.

The general plan in all monastic architecture was for the church to be on the north side of a square, whose vaulted passage was known as the cloister. This connected all the major buildings, and in it much of the daily life of the monks was spent. So marked are the similarities in the plans of the mediæval abbeys that a description of one of them will serve as a key to the whole. Let us visit Rievaulx, in Yorkshire, a Cistercian abbey founded in A.D. 1131 by monks sent by the good St. Bernard of Clairvaux.



A. Choir.
B. Transepts.
C. Nave.
D. Galilee Porch.

E. Chapter House.
F. Parlour.
G. Treasury.
H. Day Room.

I. Novices' Room.
J. Warming House.
K. Refectory.
L. Kitchen.

M. Lay Brothers.
N. Rere-Dorter.
O. Infirmary.
P. Abbot's Chambers.

The Monks' Dormitory occupied the floor above E.F.G.H.I.

Delightfully situated in a wooded valley, through which winds the little river Rye, Rievaulx Abbey still stands in that peaceful seclusion so beloved of its Cistercian founders.

On entering the ruined church one is confronted on either side by the ten blocks of masonry once forming the pillars of the nave. Here was architecture of the severest Norman type, dating evidently from the earliest days of the abbey, when the followers of St. Bernard were yet true to the austere traditions of their Order. In Cistercian monasteries the nave served as the choir of the *conversi*, or Lay Brethren, who were monks drawn from the uneducated classes and who performed much of the manual work in the abbey and its estates. We must imagine a large masonry screen, known as the *pulpitum*, stretching across the

church just westward of the tower arches. Against the west side of this screen stood the altar of the Lay Brothers' choir, and on either side of the nave were their stalls. After the time of the Black Death (A.D. 1349) the Lay Brothers died out, and we may suppose that Cistercian naves were then used chiefly for processional purposes as in the churches of the Benedictine Order. In the latter days of the Order, the nave aisles were fitted, with chapels and the recently discovered altar of one of these may be seen in the foreground of our illustration. There is still in existence a Survey of Rievaulx Abbey, made shortly after the expulsion of the monks, and this, in its quaint language, tells us much that we should not otherwise know. Of the very altar mentioned above we read that it was "a table carved without imagys" and that it had "a sele of waynscote, a great image of our Lady gyldyd" and "a great image of Seynt John gylded." Quite possibly these "great images" had been taken down from the rood beam where they had previously stood on either side of the figure of the Crucified.

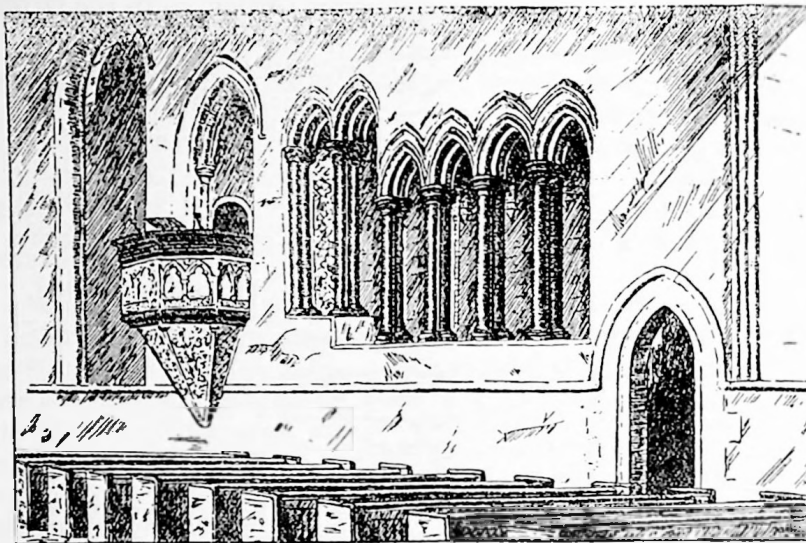
The Choir at Rievaulx—

Leaving the sad remnants of the nave we enter the great choir, glorious in its perfection of line and moulding and one of the most superb examples of "Early English" architecture extant. Neither the loss of its vaulted roof nor outer aisle walls can rob it of a beauty nowhere excelled in this country. Space does not here permit a description of this lovely choir, which was built during the thirteenth century, when the austere zeal of the early Cistercians had given way to the prevailing style of the times. The first choir had been short and without aisles, which was the usual practice during the early days of this Order, when severity of both plan and detail was strictly adhered to. The transepts at Rievaulx were only partly rebuilt, and this change in the detail is very clearly marked. One arch alone remains of the four once supporting the central tower, which must early have come to grief, for we read in the Survey of "a steple tomylled down" with the "tymber all to brokyn." At the extreme east end of the church was "a faire parclose (screen) . . . extendyng from the one syde of the Church to the other," and beyond this were five altars. The marks in the masonry of this and other screenwork may yet be seen, as also the position of some of the "gyldyd images" mentioned. There remain indications in the turf of the site of the monks' stalls, and it is interesting to notice how the elaborate carving of the tower piers is corbelled off to allow these stalls to be placed against the masonry (see Plate).

—and elsewhere

Much of what has been described in the church at Rievaulx applies to the other great ruined abbeys. At Fountains, the arches of the choir have fallen, but there remains the magnificent Chapel of the Nine Altars, built against the east end. Here also is a fine tower built on to the north transept immediately before the dissolution of the Abbey. At Kirkstall, Buildwas, Tintern, Netley and most other Cistercian Houses the choir is not so long as the nave and is in the same style of architecture.

Let us return to Rievaulx and descend the steps which lead into the cloister garth. On the east side are the low-walled remains of the chapter house, with the tombs of many abbots marked upon its floor of turf. Here the monks met daily to settle the business of the monastery and to discuss the affairs of their



THE MONK'S REFECTORY OF BEAULIEU ABBEY.

corporate life. This daily meeting was known as "Parliament." It is not generally known that the modern word was directly derived from the fact that the earliest meetings of the elected representatives of the people were held in a monastic chapter house — at Westminster. That of Rievaulx is but a low ruin, but excellent examples

may be seen at Fountains, Netley, Kirkstall, Buildwas, Cleeve and De Valle Crucis.

Next to the chapter house was the parlour, so called because the monks were allowed to talk there (French *parler*), while silence was enjoined in the cloister. It was usually little more than a vaulted passage. Southward of the parlour was a long room, often vaulted from a row of central pillars. It extended beyond the confines of the cloister and also of the warming house, which was adjacent to it on the west side. Much conjecture exists as to the precise use of this apartment, which may have been a day-room, novices' room or a store. Above all these buildings east of the cloister ran the monks' dormitory which was often of great length. It must have been so at Rievaulx, but, unfortunately, nothing remains. The best example extant is at Cleeve, where each monk had a separate cubicle, each with window and tiled seat.

In Cistercian abbeys, the south side of the cloister was occupied by warming house, refectory and kitchen. At Rievaulx the refectory is well preserved and is a magnificent building, with arcaded walls and elegant windows. It has lost its floor, which was vaulted over a cellar and, of course, its roof. One monk was deputed to read from the Bible, or the Rule, while the brethren ate, and the remains of the stone pulpit used daily by the Reader may be well seen in the west wall. Excellent examples of monastic refectories may be seen at Beaulieu and Cleeve, both of which retain their roof, and also at Fountains. On either side of the refectory door at Rievaulx are the remains of the arched recesses

which formed the *lavatorium*, where the monks washed their hands before entering.

The range of buildings against the west side of the cloister in Cistercian abbeys were occupied by the *Conversi*, or Lay Brothers, who usually had refectory and dormitory apart from that of the monks. At Rievaulx, these buildings are unusually small, but at Fountains they are large and splendidly preserved.

No description of an abbey is complete without some reference to the cloister. The four sides of the square always had a *pentise*, or covered way, supported on the inner side by arches of stone or of wood. These latter were often filled with glass, so that communication could be freely made between all parts of the monastery in all weathers. Cistercian cloisters never seem to have attained the traceried exuberance of those Benedictine abbeys such as Gloucester or Westminster.

Eastward of the main buildings, and often connected with them by a small cloister of its own, stood the infirmary, where the sick and aged were tended. This was a large hall, with a chapel at its eastern end and its own kitchen. One wall remains at Rievaulx, while at Fountains and Tintern only the general outline is visible in the turf.

A Self-contained Community

Of the remaining buildings in the mediæval monastery it is not possible here to give more than a bare mention. There were often an outer and an inner gatehouse, specimens of which may be seen at St. Albans, Battle, Cleeve and elsewhere: guesthouses, where rich and poor were entertained—two remain at Fountains; an almonry, from which food and clothing were distributed to the poor; brewhouses, bakehouses, smithies, a mill, barns and all the accessory buildings of a self-contained community. As the public were not generally admitted to Cistercian churches, these abbeys provided a chapel at the gate, many excellent examples of which may yet be seen. At Rievaulx, this chapel has been enlarged and restored after being in ruin for centuries, and it now serves the spiritual needs of the village.

The writer has endeavoured, within a small compass, to give a reasonably comprehensive description of the English abbeys as they are and as they were in the heyday of their activity. It has not been possible to enter into the economic aspect of their history. As is well known, they became the possessors of large tracts of land, and much of the science of farming and agriculture is due to their pioneer efforts. They drained the fens, built bridges and roads, cleared the forests, tended the sick, founded schools and colleges—all in an age when barons built huge castles from which to wage war on their neighbours and bloodshed was common in the land.

Let the modern pilgrim remember that, however lax this or that abbey may have become in its latter days, for centuries it had shown forth the light of the Gospel and the compassion of the Divine Master.

Truly these were the Houses that Love Built, and for this alone may we continue to venerate the mellowed and broken stones which remain.

T. A. B.

THE OPEN HUSTINGS

Can Everyman Afford His Club ?

DEAR EDITOR,

The question raised by H. B. in his letter, as printed in the February number of the JOURNAL, must—and should—give all our members seriously to think, especially if it is taken in conjunction with the articles contributed by P. W. M. and A. St. G. Colthurst in the same issue.

We in Toc H—no less than as a nation—need to devote much more time than we do to hard thinking, since the very existence of Toc H will be imperilled unless we will reason out for ourselves some of the more pressing problems which confront us. Such action would in itself also be of value outside our Movement since any results achieved will gradually tend towards a moulding of public opinion. But dealing now with *our* financial needs only.

I agree emphatically with Padre Colthurst's views on finance, yet it is apparent from what P. W. M. tells us that we are not doing nearly enough—even now—towards making our own Movement self-supporting. The figures furnished by him in the penultimate paragraph of his (P. W. M.'s) own article are illuminating, as furnishing evidence that we are very far from paying our way. This being so, it is obvious that Toc H is even now at a standstill—for though we are not actually reversing, yet we are certainly not going ahead.

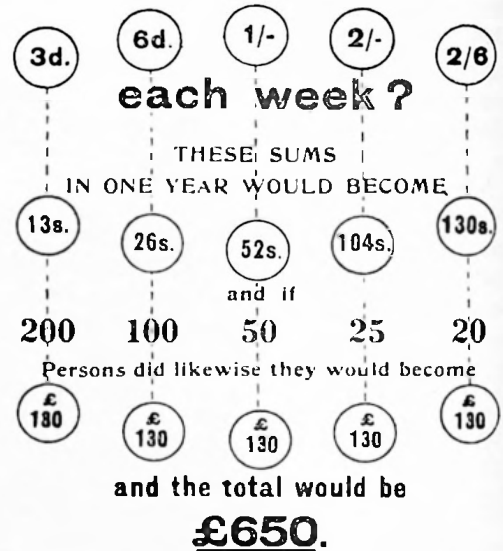
To my mind the usual method of framing assessments on units on the basis of, say, 10s. per head of the membership, is as wrong in principle as it is ineffective in practice, while it leads to a strengthening of the belief voiced by H. B. that Toc H is becoming too expensive for many of its whole-hearted supporters.

To my way of thinking, our Central Executive should make it binding on all units to contribute a certain percentage of their annual income to Area Funds, while cutting out entirely the old-time Capitation fees which are really negligible and which were framed at a time when the cost of financing

Toc H was very much less than it is to-day.

The calibre of units varies, being dependent entirely upon locality; for it is obvious that those which are representative of industrial areas cannot be expected to contribute on anything like the same scale as others which consist largely of men who live either in the suburbs of a large town or in what are known as residential areas.

FOR the WORK of TOC H! Can you give



Many of these last-named members may also be Builders; but quite apart from their own additional effort, it is obviously unsound finance—and finance which is degrading to many of our members—for any unit to rely on the charity of non-members for a provision of a large portion of the funds which are necessary for the maintenance and progress of our Movement as a whole. And this is a state of things to which we are now being party, when units are allowed to include in their assessments moneys which are contributed by any Builders who may live in the locality.

A levy of, say, 25 per cent. (or even up to 33 per cent.) on the funds of all units would go a long way towards making Toc H self-supporting, while the balance should in the majority of cases be sufficient to enable any unit to provide for its own needs and also for the furtherance of those good causes to which so many of our Branches and Groups have already pledged themselves in their self-sacrificing efforts to give of service to the Other Fellow who needs a helping hand. Moreover, there are many of our members who can give a little extra—and who do already give it freely—and such can always be relied upon to augment the finances of their unit (possibly anonymously) in the event of there being any deficit on the year's working.

But apart even from this, it is remarkable what results can be achieved by a little systematic effort and self-denial on the part of Everyman even if only as affecting the smallest of his more personal pleasures. For instance, if each man who enjoys a smoke would deny himself a pipeful of tobacco or a cigarette a day, and would put the equivalent value into one of those little home safes which can be obtained from any bank, and then hand over the proceeds to the treasurer of his unit at the end of the year, a very appreciable sum would be forthcoming.

But each member can devise methods which would meet the occasion and yet scarcely feel the effect if it were done systematically and from day to day. I speak from experience.

But whatever the form of denial, we all do need to consider what is the price we can each pay to further the progress of Toc H—remembering what we do is for the sake of the Other Fellow, and the Other Fellow is not found just merely in Toc H, but in the world as a whole.

And it is for the betterment of the world as a whole that Toc H has a great work to do.

Yours faithfully,

H. LEIGH GROVES.

Holebird,

Windermere.

DEAR EDITOR,

I am surprised at the letters which have recently appeared under the heading "Can Everyman afford his Club"? and especially at the letter signed "J. S. Wilkinson" in the March issue of the JOURNAL. If the family method is practised the answer quite obviously is "Yes," but if we try to run a Branch on any but the Toc H lines then equally obviously the answer is "No."

I have been taught that Toc H is a "life to be lived" enabling us to be Positive Christians, giving the other fellow a help along the road, not considering the *fact* of whether we shall thereby save our own paltry souls but whether we can save his. If this is so, then let us get on with the job, not waste our time tilting "mufflers" against "plus-fours."

With regard to the above letter. If it is necessary to put in brackets ("not all of whom are sufficiently keen to pay subs. regularly") then surely it is time that the Branch looked more deeply into the family idea of Toc H and incidentally moved into a Room at a rental considerably less than £36 per annum. If one really gets hold of the possibilities of Toc H, then playing it "with any degree of thoroughness" means bringing it into one's work and play but does not necessarily mean travelling to Festivals one can ill afford.

If it be "remarkable that there are even a few working members of Toc H," then the *fact* that there are crowds of "working-men" members paying their 1d. per week and the best of friends with their more fortunate comrades who can manage 2s. 6d. is incredible. It may be that Toc H gatherings on a large scale are *apparently* confined to the "plus-four" type, but has it ever struck J. S. W. that spread over the workshops and factories of England are Toc H "working-men" spreading the Gospel without preaching it? Of course it is our duty to find sums of money for the Area. Are we continually going to let it be said that Toc H in England is living on money which should be used for Toc H missionary work in New Zealand or Malaya?

Being acquainted with a number of the full-time Staff I say they are not the type of man who "tells us of the sacrifice he is making for Toc H." Incidentally they are at everyone's beck and call, working twelve and fourteen hours a day, and we who work eight or nine hours for our £3 per week or less can, and do, appreciate the sacrifice they are making.

Let us away with this false pride, and only then shall we realise that the Spirit of Toc H has to be spread abroad by the sacrifices of time and money, which means giving more than we can afford comfortably whether we earn £2 per week or £200.

Yours sincerely,

E. M. HARBOROW,

Poynton Branch, North-Western Area.

Poynton, Cheshire.

"The Holy Thorn"

DEAR EDITOR,

We here in America who have always loved the legend of the Holy Thorn at Glastonbury, just thoroughly relished the perfectly beautiful story of it which Barkis wrote in the February Toc H JOURNAL, and we had no more than read it when we thought of what happened to the branch of the Holy Thorn which was sent over from Glastonbury to the Cathedral which is building at the Capitol of our Nation at Washington. We are indebted to England for a number of glorious memorials in this Cathedral, but none more unique than the branch of the Glastonbury Thorn which is prominently planted in the Cathedral grounds.

Along with the Thorn from England came the legend also that the Thorn would always blossom whenever Royalty came. The clergy and the staff of the Cathedral never forgot this, and on the occasion of the last visit of the Prince of Wales to Washington all of the clergy at the Cathedral became agog with interest and excitement, to see how truly the legend would work on an actual visitation from Royalty.

The programme was that the Prince was to come out on a certain day to the Cathedral and

to be presented with a little golden casket holding various mementos of the Cathedral itself. On the day before the Prince's visit, everyone was watching carefully the Thorn from all angles for the much expected and really hoped for blossoming. It snowed that day but none thought amiss of that, knowing quite well the Thorn's traditional disregard of convention in regard to its blossoming, but all that day no blossoms showed. Well into the evening, and along to a late bed going, the younger of the clergy, particularly, kept hopefully watching this scion of the Holy Thorn, but with no avail, and the legend was just about thrown into the mental scrap basket as a lovely story but a huge joke, when one of the junior Canons, with perhaps a bit more faith than the others, crept out in the very early morning, only a few hours before the Prince was to come, and sure enough, lo and behold, there in the midst of the snow appeared a lovely little spray of blossoms. This very spray of blossoms was plucked and was among the little mementos of sentimental value which were placed in the golden casket which was given the Prince that morning when he came to the Cathedral.

Sincerely,

Baltimore, U.S.A.

GUS VARIAN.

DEAR EDITOR,

I want to thank you for taking us on another Pilgrimage to Glastonbury—this time in imagination only but still most enjoyable. Your article in the February JOURNAL recalls to me the journeys I have made from Bath over Mendip to the Isle of Avalon. My home is at Bath or Aquæ Solis, whichever you prefer to call it, and, my first name being Arthur, I took a very early interest in that legendary figure—in whom personally I believe—and I like to think that the other things you mention are true too. There is a bush grown from a piece of the Glastonbury Thorn in the Botanical Gardens of the Royal Victoria Park at Bath, which blossoms at Christmas and at Easter, as I can bear witness.

Yours sincerely,

Leamington.

"AJAX."



AN IDEA FROM NORWICH.

A pillar-box built, painted in Toc H colours, and set up in a prominent place in the town by the Norwich Heigham Group to collect papers and magazines for distribution at the infirmary. Save for its gay black and amber, the box remains anonymous, but its silent and continuous work and the interest it arouses have proved the idea a most successful one.



Toc H Toronto provide an able and strong-armed construction company to build the new Mission Hall of Padre Walton—seen on the left holding a symbolic hammer.

"E.S.F.A."

THE Ex-Service Friends' Association (E.S.F.A.) has now been working 2½ years for ex-War-Service men and their dependants, and now that we are affiliated to Toc H, we are hoping for help from all Branches and Groups in the Kingdom. Leytonstone, for example, is doing yeoman service for us already.

We want to stress the point that those men who returned from the various battle fronts gave their lives for us as much as those whose bodies are buried in foreign lands, it was only the fortune of War that saved them from making the "supreme sacrifice."

It seems that the youth of the present day is getting sick of all reference to the War, and the debt we owe to those who fought for us. We would urge on them that there is a large body of men who sacrificed everything, short of their lives, that the rising generation might live in safety and comfort. These men are now wandering about the country seeking for employment and all Toc H can help them if it will. Members may not be able to find work for them, they certainly can't for all of them, but if they will give one evening a week to receiving them and listening sympathetically to their tales of troubles it will help, and, too, it will save men drifting to London who should never do so.

Anyone wishing for further particulars should apply to Col. J. C. Stitt at the Headquarters of E.S.F.A., 3a, All Souls Place, Langham Place, W.1.

J. C. S.

IN MEMORIAM

J. F. E. Smith : Newland Group

The other day Frank Smith, Secretary of the Newland Group and Hull District Organiser, embarked at the early age of 23 on the great adventure. Although young in years, he was no stranger to responsibilities, and as a staunch Christian he served his Church faithfully and threw himself into the service of Toc H body and soul. He was a born leader, and many good things will continue to be done "because Frank would have wished it so."

MULTUM IN PARVO

✦ Summer Pilgrims to the OLD HOUSE are reminded that on and after May 15 the return train to Dunkirk will leave Hazebrouck at 11.21 p.m. instead of 10.47 (which will enable them to remain at Poperinghe till 5) and arrival in London will be at 9.25 a.m.

✦ The Fifth Athletic Sports Meeting of Toc H London will be held on Saturday, May 2, at the Duke of Yorks Headquarters, Chelsea. Full particulars may be obtained from John Mallet at Toc H Headquarters.

✦ Sixteen teams from as far afield as Eton entered for the annual Toc H SEVEN-A-SIDE RUGGER TOURNAMENT at Barnet on March 28. After many keenly fought games, Mark VII beat Mark II, 8-0, in a brilliant final, thereby winning the W. A. Dodd Cup from last year's winners, Mark I.

✦ Congratulations to DUNKLEY (Mark II) who played in the English Rugby team against Ireland, on being chosen again to play against Scotland; to HENRY REW (Royal Tank Corps, late Exeter Branch) on his inclusion in the same team; and to C. M. FLETCHER (late Eton College Group) on his place in the Cambridge University Boat.

✦ *Secretaries' List : Additions and Alterations :* The following changes should be made in the list which appears in the Annual Report this month : EAST SUSSEX DISTRICT Secretary to 11, Linton Crescent, Hastings; MID-DURHAM DISTRICT, E. Binney, 75, Thomas Street, Craghead, Co. Durham; TEES-SIDE DISTRICT, W. Potter, Sunniside, Elgin Avenue, Grange-town, Yorks.; TYNESIDE DISTRICT, J. E. Harper, 11, Richmond Terrace, Monkseaton, Northumberland.

DESPATCHES OF THE MONTH

Letters from the North-Western and South-Eastern Areas will appear next month. All news should now be addressed to Area Secretaries instead of to the Editor of the JOURNAL.

From Yorkshire

"THEREFORE, I don't exactly know what constitutes a good trouser. But if it means being a good companion, or trying to be a good companion, then I'm proud to be called one—absolutely. Somehow"—he was in earnest now, saying for once something that was very real and important, felt in the heart, and not being, in spite of all his easy chatter, one of that rapidly increasing horde of glib self-confessors, he could only stammer it out—"somehow—there isn't too much—er—good companionship left—is there? I mean—people don't sort of pull together much now, do they? Everybody's—well, not everybody, but a lot of people—are out for a good time—and that's all right, of course; I'm all for it; the more the merrier, so to speak—but it's nearly always their own good time and nobody else's they're out after, isn't it? An awful lot of hard nuts about now, somehow—and only soft in the wrong places. Well, of course, I'm not any better than anybody else, bit worse, I dare say, but I'd like one or two people to say I was a good companion. That's one of the things that's attracted me about this—what's it?—concert party; a good crowd sticking together. That's where the fun really comes in, isn't it? Look here, I'm making an awful mess of this, y'know. I can gas—but I can't really talk—but," he ends with a sudden burst—"I could write it, and I will do before long. Thanks very much!"

Thus Mr. Inigo Jollifant expressed in halting phrases exactly what we in Toc H Yorkshire are trying in our more serious moments to be—"a good crowd sticking together." Like him, we are finding "an awful lot of hard nuts about," who are "only soft in the wrong places," but all the same, we are getting quite a lot of fun out of our little groups of people who would like to be known as "good companions."

Since last you heard from us in Yorkshire, the work of patient construction has gone steadily on. The Area Executive has completed its first term of office, and has left a sure foundation upon which the team of 1931 may build; already that which one member of the Executive declared to be "almost impossible"—the binding into one whole of all the diverse parts of this great county, together with a bit of Notts. and a bit of Derby—is being achieved, and the sense of unity is born. Perhaps the Christmas Festival did as much as anything to bring this about, for then men came from every part to praise and pray and sing and laugh together, to listen to the great Costain and the beloved Pat, to sleep on boards as hard as any dugout floor, and learn by friendships made that Toc H by the sea is as good as Toc H in the industrial world.

District Committees, too, have been thinking out their obligations and the methods by which they are to be met in week-end conferences. If only out of them can emerge an increased sense of responsibility amongst the representatives from the Branches and Groups, and a greater determination amongst those units to send their best men to the district teams, we shall be well content. There are two things by which we are still bound—the opinion that these men are delegates guarding the interests of their Group before all else, and the fear that if the best men are sent to the district team they will be lost for work at home. The first is best defeated by our faith in each other ("Give them your trust; don't vote it; give it them," says Tubby), the second by a group unselfishness which is hard to demand but easier to give. Often, too, the secretary will himself undertake the task and so ensure a chain unbroken by defection.

In any case, as district by district the modes best suited to each peculiar problem are evolved, the ancient Pauline truth is coming home to roost; no unit can live unto itself, the Branch is but a portion of a larger whole, and, just as a man most fully finds himself as he himself forgets, so Branches will one day be found most fully active which are absorbed in the district's good.

Good will, like ripples on a pool, is best expressed in ever-widening circles, and is most easily acquired by a refusal to confine one's attention to one's friend, or even to one's group of mates. The furthest distances are brought most vividly within our view as each section of the telescope is brought into play, and "our farthest kindred in Toc H" will become a more practical reality as we become accustomed to consider them by way of our district and our area.

The year has opened with the establishment of two new districts, the Wakefield and the Craven district. The first is the child of Leeds, the second the result of a year's experimental team building in a provincial district. Both have grown, each in their own way, from below, and we wish them good luck in their adventure. Of both there are great expectations, for in both are foundations firm.

With the advent of Spring the new life is beginning to push through the soil. There are signs of growth in many places, definite gropes and contacts in fifteen spots since last November, all of which must be carefully nurtured if they are to burst into flower. Several Rushlights have been granted, and Alfreton, Keighley, and Skipton have been promoted to Branch Status. The love and good wishes of the whole Area go with them as they march to the lighting of their lamps next June. Some may have cast impatient glances at the map of Yorkshire as they compared that huge stretch of country with the paltry 65 registered units in the JOURNAL list, and wondered why it was that our growth should be so slow. They need not be disturbed. Ours is not the ambling gait of middle age; rather there is a marshalling of forces for an advance which will surely come. During the last two years we have managed to resist the temptation to invade new territory by planting new gropes which have not been asked for by the local inhabitants, in order that we may not be outstripped in numbers by other Areas. We have contented ourselves with nursing the present life until the living Groups and Branches, "swelling visibly" with energy, should be ready to implode upon their nextdoor neighbour. Now, too, we have our systematic method of beginning: first the pivotal man, then the small group round him, then the Rushlight and expansion into Guest-nights, and work. "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear"—it sounds as though it should be right, and, after all, they are only weeds that spring up overnight.

The pilots have been taking Professor Cock at his word and have been indulging in a correspondence course under the ingenious "Monty." Every quarter they go to school again and grapple upon paper with such searching questions as these:—"Is fairmindedness more than just seeing the other man's point of view?" "Toc H is an organism, not an organisation; what is the difference?" etc. Then they meet and hear the right answers, and go back again to do another exam. This is so valuable that the jobmasters are asking for it, too.

Examinations make me think of schools, and Tattersall has been doing some mighty work amongst the Lilliputians. Huddersfield, Doncaster, Pontefract, Leeds, Wakefield, York, Ackworth, Halifax, Barnsley, Chesterfield, Worksop, Harrogate, have all established useful links and are beginning to display more than a perfunctory interest in Toc H. Both Sedbergh School and Worksop College are pioneers in a new adaptation of the holiday industrial tour, which we hope will be followed by other schools in the Area as time goes on. From Sedbergh came twelve of the leading boys to Leeds, where for a week-end in term-time they were the guests of Red House and the Leeds District. Unemployment was their chief concern, and Saturday afternoon found them busy with talks given by experts on that thorny problem. On Saturday night came a Guest-night, when "Toc H in action" won their hearts, and so to bed and the counting of 63 chimneys from the bedroom windows. Sunday services in Parish Church and Chapel were followed by personal visits to the homes of the really poor, and so with hearts enlarged they returned to school, pondering with quickened minds upon the ways that some *must* live. Worksop came to Sheffield to meet for themselves the men in casual wards and lodging-houses, to visit a steelworks, to mix with Toc H in a Guest-night, and sleep

in a Mark as Sedbergh had done. They, too, have gone back brimming with enthusiasm and have caught Toc H badly. As one said, "It's all so different to anything we have been told, and we want lots more." Here is an unlimited field for the spread of the Spirit, whether they join Toc H or not, and our hopes for it are unbounded.

We must not close without a deep note of thanksgiving for the removal of many of the obstacles which seemed to obstruct our advance when this most trying winter began, but most of all for the gallant way in which "our Financial Leo" is being dealt with. It seemed impossible that with the strain of daily living so great we could ever hope to find the money necessary for our life. And yet, not only are we well on the way to the finding of our quota for this year, but also the methods by which it is being found are the finest and sternest that can be. Conferences, district by district, have removed the misunderstandings which puzzled many minds, and only here and there are left tiny patches of reluctance. Not only is the Outer Guard of Builders beginning to be formed, but members, too, are straining every nerve to remove the burden of our Area from the shoulders of Headquarters. We are determined to be self-supporting, come what may, and a Yorkshireman is usually in the habit of saying what he means.

"Remember," said Tubby once, "that Toc H is strongest of all where it asks most and promises least." We are making no promises, but just you wait and see! A. ST. G. C.

From London

I HAVE come to the conclusion that Jig-Saw puzzles are an over-rated pastime. Thanks to the diligence of District Journalists a wealth of "bits and pieces," in the shape of facts, figures, hopes, fears, and theories concerning Toc H in London are spread out on the table in front of me, but after what seems hours of juggling with them, I seem to be no nearer fitting them together into a coherent and consecutive whole.

To be at once historian, philosopher, and seer; to wield the blue pencil of an editor and the inspired pen of a "literary gent"; to be both diverting and informative; this would require the wisdom of Solomon, as well as the patience of Job. And I possess neither of these qualities. So I have given it up. Fortunately there is another way of treating the pieces of a Jig-Saw Puzzle, and that is to treat them as though they were the pieces in a kaleidoscope; to mix them and shuffle them and throw them out haphazard on to the table, in the faint hope that the pattern thus formed will be both pleasant and satisfying. This then must be my method, and the result is on the lap of the gods.

First of all (since one must start somewhere), some facts. On March 31, London's first Area Executive expired in a blaze of glory, dragging with it into the grave a quite considerable brood of teams and sub-committees. At its last meeting it exercised one of the privileges of senile decay and indulged in some retrospect. If mere numbers count for anything, that record of twenty-one new Groups sanctioned, and more than 400 new members elected, would seem to be sufficient answer to those of us who feared that "strangulation by red tape" was likely to be the verdict at any inquest on the year's work. Moreover, fourteen Groups during the year were promoted to Branch status. Five of these were mentioned in the London letter last November and since then nine have won Lamps—Buckhurst Hill, Carshalton and Sutton, East Ham, Hackney, Harlesden, New Barnet, Palmers Green, Romford, and Sydenham.

On the debit side of the balance-sheet, three Groups have been cancelled—proof, if one were needed, that Toc H is still an adventure and, like all adventures, must sometimes fail. "Safety First" may be an excellent slogan for the London County Council to inculcate into school children, but for Toc H it could never be anything but an inglorious epitaph. Risks must be taken, experiments made, and failures faced without discouragement.

Lest we become self-satisfied about our extension, let us remind ourselves here of the ridiculous smallness of Toc H in London as compared with London's vastness. "Of this enormous

Babel of a place," wrote Thomas Carlyle to his brother over a century ago, "I can give you no account in writing: it is like the heart of all the universe; and the flood of human effort rolls out of it and into it with a violence that almost appals one's very sense. . . . The thick smoke of it beclouds a space of thirty square miles; and a million vehicles grind along its streets for ever." Add the increasing complexity of another hundred years' growth and development, and how insignificant a place Toc H, with its three thousand odd members, must seem to occupy against so vast a background. ("Odd" in this context should not be taken to mean "peculiar"—or should it?) Yet there are historical precedents for mighty cities being captured by fewer men.

Viewed in this light, the extension recorded during the Area Executive's year of office has been none too large, but Toc H is no hot-house plant and its growth cannot be forced. Unless it grows in depth proportionately as it grows in extent there can be no lasting progress. It is the texture of the spirit of it that matters. "*Le roi est mort, vive le roi.*" On April 1 (O frabjous day!), a new Area Executive rose Phoenix-like from the ashes of the old and its members have already spent a week-end together at Pierhead House, Wapping, getting to know one another and planning the coming year's work.

Leaders not Tram Conductors

Many problems confront us in London, not least among them the problem of leadership. Fourteen men from the West Middlesex District recently spent a profitable Sunday wrestling with this particular problem and reached the following point of agreement which seems worthy of recording here because its application is surely wider than London Toc H:

"That if Toc H on this side of London is to arrive at any splendid destiny a new relay of youth must come to the forefront, with fresh ideas and vigour, even as the men of longer service have guided it till now. Unless such reinforcements come, Toc H will merely run along lines like a tram—useful maybe, but certainly prosaic, unadventurous, unattractive.

There was a young man who said "Damn,
It appears to me now that I am
Just a being that moves
In predestinate grooves
Not a bus, not a bus, but a tram!"

Grooves are certainly not attractive to the young, and if younger members of Toc H in London are arriving at the same conclusion about Toc H as the young man in the limerick reached about life in general, then indeed it is time for some bombs to be exploded and some of those nice straight safe tram-lines gloriously wrecked. To quote again from the Men of West Middlesex:

"It was a blurred and imperfect vision of the Toc H of ten years hence which the Fourteen carried away as they froze on the homeward-bound lorry. Yet, in the words of any junior reporter describing any tea-fight, 'a good time was had by all.' It was a Sunday not ill-spent if it quickens realisation that Toc H must be like that lorry—able to take paths of adventurous service—rather than like the trams it passed. But new hands and new heads are wanted to take their turn at the steering wheel."

"We that are left grow old." How hard it is for some of us to stomach this unpalatable truth. The average age of the membership of London Branches, as shown on their Annual Reports to the London Guard of the Lamp, is slightly higher this year than last. Is this inevitable as time passes, or can it be that younger members are not sufficiently encouraged, are indeed actually discouraged—though of course not consciously—because the lion's share of the leadership is often in the hands of the not-so-young?

Training week-ends are, we hope, doing their part in stimulating this much-needed crop of new and younger leaders. Eight have already been held at Pierhead House, Wapping, as well

as two "refresher" week-ends for those who attended them, and a new series has been planned for the autumn. In order to increase the effectiveness of these, an attempt at classification is to be made and there are to be three types of week-end; (a) for Group members, especially newcomers to Toc H, (b) for Branch members and leaders, and (c) for District Committees. For the first two of these District Secretaries for the most part will act as selectors.

But we must look farther ahead than this. If we are to be true to our trust and pass on the torch that we ourselves received to the generation that is to come, it is not too early to be making our preparations; and here, surely, lies the value and purpose of the Schools Section. If it is true of the Elder Brethren that "they could not build without us," it is equally true that without these younger brothers of ours we, too, shall not be able to build. At the Conference of the London Schools' representatives held on March 19, it was agreed that a real effort must be made to tackle the large number of secondary schools in the London area to which at present there is no access. Contact with elementary schools for the time being, alas, is impracticable, partly because of the early age at which boys leave, and partly because of the very enormity of the task, but in clubs, troops and brigades throughout London our members are in touch with many of these lads and in such ways as this will the spirit be transmitted. There are at the moment 22 S.S. representatives in the Area and new men must be found if the work is to advance.

Only twice in the year now does the whole London membership have the chance to come together under one roof, once at its Birthday Festival in December, and once, by Tubby's invitation, at the Pancake Party on Shrove Tuesday. An account of the latter, from an abler pen than mine, appeared in the March JOURNAL, and all that need be said here is that the evening provided ample evidence that Toc H in London is still a family, in spite of its yearly increasing size; and a particularly cheery family at that. The ceremony of Light was taken by Alex Birkmire, who leaves the London Staff at the end of this month. Sorry indeed we are to lose him, but happily he will not be altogether lost to us, for although he can no longer be a Staff Padre he will be living in the Area, and in one capacity or another his friendship and his burning love for Toc H and everything for which it stands will continue to be a joy and an inspiration to many. On the same evening, another farewell had to be said. Colin Cuttall, for several years office assistant in the London Office, made his final appearance before sailing for Edmonton, Alberta, to take up a post as parish worker. The good wishes of a host of London members go with him. Norman High, known to many East London members as the Sub-District Secretary of the Forest Sub-District, has taken his place.

A London Toc H Magazine

Since the London Letter in the November JOURNAL was written, an important new feature in the life of London Toc H has made its appearance. Sharp on the advertised date (Oh, cruel thrust!—JOURNAL ED.), the London Toc H Magazine arrived from its publishers—the British Legion Press at Aylesford—and, thanks to a busy team of "packers" at Mark VII, very soon found its way into the hands of members. The fact that the whole of the first issue (1,250 copies) has already been sold out seems to prove that the Mag. supplied a genuine and long-felt need. Donald Cox, the Editor, has no easy task, but London could not have a better man for the job and there is every reason to feel sure that under his editorial blue pencil and scissors the Mag. will prove a worthy supplement to—and not, of course, substitute for—the JOURNAL.

"It will be a link to bind our hundred families more closely together. It will be a channel for information and inspiration. It will enable units to pass on instructive ideas. It will give scope for literary talent which we have wasted so far. And if those who write 'love wisely' and 'think fairly,' the London Toc H Magazine, like its elder brother the JOURNAL, will 'witness humbly' and will be a power to 'build bravely' the Toc H, far greater than we have yet imagined, that Toc H is meant to become." So says Harry Willink, London's Chairman, in his front page message. And so say all of us!

With a magazine of our own, in which a large proportion of the space is devoted to local news, it is obviously not the function of this letter to give any sort of detailed account of the varied activities of the London Branches and Groups—even if this were possible. Feet firm, hand busy—that is the burden of the reports from the districts, and, thanks perhaps to Professor Cock's thought-provoking words to us at the London Birthday, there is evidence that some minds at any rate are busy too.

London is Still Growing Up

One problem, which concerns more districts than one, is connected with the various Housing Estates which have sprung up in the last half-dozen years (and are still springing) on the fringes of Greater London. The Watling Estate on the North-West with its 20,000 inhabitants, the vast Morden and St. Helier estate on the South-West, estates at Bellingham, Downham, Becontree and elsewhere—surely Toc H has some contribution to make to the rapidly-developing civic and community life of such places as these. Yet access to them from without is not easy and there are many difficulties to be faced by any units formed within their boundaries. What is the answer to this riddle? We don't know yet, but a number of members are determined to find one, and to this end have arranged an informal meeting at which experiences will be pooled and ideas exchanged.

Already this letter has rambled on over long, yet there is still much about which I might write; of week-end conferences at Wapping, of Pilots and of Jobmasters; of the increasing number of younger members attending evening institutes (a splendid opportunity, surely, for training for the "service of thought" of which Professor Cock spoke, and to be regarded by Jobmasters as a job in the truest sense); of Camps and rambles planned for the summer days ahead when no amount of open windows can bring enough fresh air into stuffy meeting-places; of Cripple Parlours (more than 20 London units are now helping the Shaftesbury Society); of blood-transfusion volunteers and hospital visitors; of wireless repair-squads and Poor Man's Lawyers; of Kiddies' Parties and Old Folks' Parties, and the friendly visiting of lads from the depressed areas; of clubs for the blind and clubs for the deaf and dumb; of work in boys' clubs, scout troops and brigades, and a score of other individual jobs done regularly and enthusiastically; and (lest it be thought we take ourselves too seriously) of fish-and-chip-suppers and sing-songs and uproarious omnibus-tops; of sausages fried on inadequate gas-rings, of Bring-Your-Own-Grub-Nights and surprise long-distance "implosions"; of friendship and good-comradeship and incredibly humorous adventures surprisingly encountered in the most unpromising places. Really, Mr. Editor,

Toc H is so full of a number of things

That I'm sure we should all be as happy as kings.

COCKNEY THE SECOND.

From the Western Area

A RECENT decision of the "High Court" divided the old Western Area into two which are now the Western and South-Western Areas. The new Western Area now finds itself the baby of Toc H as regards number of units, but we are growing slowly yet surely. The Area now extends from Tewkesbury in the North to Glastonbury on the South, and from Hungerford in the East to Cinderford in the West, incidentally comprising some of the most beautiful scenery in England. There are five Branches in the Area, one of which, Cheltenham, had the distinction of being the first country Group to get its Lamp. The other twelve units are young and healthy Groups. Nor must we forget to mention the two Houses, Marks IX and XVI at Bristol and Swindon, always ready to welcome newcomers (but book well in advance if you want a bed).

Ere this appears in print we shall have our Area Executive in full working order. It will be strange at first taking over our own responsibilities, as we do look to London for so much guidance and help, but when a family starts to grow up, one sends them to school and lets somebody else look after them.

An event to be recorded was the dedication of the Painswick Rushlight in October. Painswick, to the unknowing, is a town in Gloucestershire famous for its peal of bells at the parish church. The record number of changes is held by Painswick, although there are some close competitors. The journey there by bus takes one through some wonderful scenery, and at the time of the dedication the autumn foliage was at its best. The service was held in the parish church and for some considerable time before the service we were treated to a sample of the prowess of the bellringers.

It may seem a long time to hark back to last summer, yet these two items from Chippenham and Gloucester may be worth recording on their merits.

Chippenham's Most Interesting Job

We were admitted to Group status on May Day last, and our most interesting and striking piece of work has been our effort to raise funds for the local Cottage Hospital. We really woke up on July 17 when we played a comic cricket match on the Chippenham Cricket Club's ground in the beautiful setting of Hardenhuish Park. The players included a stately sheik, a bishop, "W.G.," a chef, a Red Indian, a yokel, a clown, a maiden aunt, a flapper or two, and other characters. An amusing parody of a Test Match ended in a draw and so ended a pleasant evening. The townsfolk entered very heartily into the fun of the thing and the gate realised the very satisfactory sum of £16.

The week preceding Christmas a further effort was made, when 4,900 envelopes bearing a printed invitation to pass it round the dinner table on Christmas Day were distributed. The collection after Christmas was a much more strenuous matter when rude Boreas and lachrymose Jupiter Pluvius joined forces to test our moral and physical stamina. As one stood on the cottage doorsteps waiting for the envelopes to be found, poor old King Lear's lament, "Blow, blow, thou winter wind, thou art not so unkind as man's ingratitude," constantly recurred to one's mind, but this was offset by the daily experience that "kind hearts were more than coronets," and the unexpectedly large sum of over £83 was collected by Toc H, we having the satisfaction of bringing about £100 of new money to the coffers of a most deserving institution.

The chairman of the hospital who provided the envelopes expected to raise anything from £1 to £20 by the venture, but his surprise and gratification were warmly expressed in a letter of thanks to the blokes who did the job, and included the Padre, an admiral, the Mayor of Chippenham, the Under Sheriff of the County, as well as the unemployed labourer.

The example of Poperinghe is always before us, and we are humbly trying to live up to the high ideals of Service and Sacrifice in order that "Peace may claim her victories as well as War."

The Coming of the Romans to Gloucester

Like many other jobs, a letter started it. Could Toc H produce and perform an episode in a pageant? About eighty performers would be required; neighbouring units would help with man-power. They would have to be drilled and dressed: it was found that hire of costumes could not be obtained under £50, a sum quite beyond the means of the Branch. A consultation with the L.W.H. followed. Yes, it was possible to make the costumes, but it would be a big job. Anyhow they set about it and for weeks they toiled: tunics and kilts were fairly easy, but there were dozens of them; wigs were made from tow; plimsols, with a few holes cut in the right places and hessian strips up the back, made very serviceable sandals. Armour was difficult, but cardboard, string and gold paint, plus a little ingenuity, did the trick.

Shields, swords, javelins and clubs all made from wood, were scrounged or made by members. And fellowship made great strides during those hectic weeks.

As the time drew nearer, the "Kitchen" became more and more like a rag-shop. Meanwhile the producer raved and did his best to lick the mob into shape. Only another week before the show. They worked on and hoped for the best. "It will be all right when the time comes"; ye gods, what faith. . . .

It is the last of the eight performances. From the southern entrance, a crowd of wild and savage-looking men and women, clad in skins and shapeless garments of hessian, stroll into the flood-lighted arena, bearing with them the spoils of the chase in Ancient Britain. They are almost across, when a trumpet is heard which presages the coming of the ruthless Roman Army. Led by a stalwart Aquilifer, in single file they march into the arena, their scarlet tunics, golden accoutrements and silvered shields making a gallant show. Still on the march they form threes, and then out into fighting formation. Meanwhile the men in the Britons' Camp have advanced to the attack and with savage cries hurl themselves on the invaders. The fight is whole-hearted and furious; their chieftain fights madly but falls mortally wounded. His followers retreat, but not fast enough, and the Romans with an encircling movement take a number of prisoners. The conquerors withdraw with their prisoners, leaving the Britons to recover the body of their chief in peace. The second scene is in progress. The Roman centurion is drawn up near the dais; on the ground between the ranks lie the prisoners in chains. Again a trumpet is heard and a detachment of soldiers enters, bearing in his chair Aulus Plautius, Governor of Britain. He inspects the troop, and then consults with his advisers as to the fate of the prisoners. His hand is raised and the unfortunate prisoners are kicked into movement, led a short distance and executed, to the great distress of the Britons gathered nearby. The Governor takes the salute, reseats himself and is carried away, followed by the soldiers. The Britons take up their dead and bear them away, singing a dirge as they go.

The lights fade out: Toc H and the L.W.H. have done their job to help the great effort for the Gloucestershire Royal Infirmary.

Toc H Goes West

And what of the future? Before we appear in print again a lot will have happened. The summer, which seems so dreadfully short, will have passed once more. But we can at least make the most of it—not seeking to enjoy ourselves so much as to help others to enjoy it. Camping will probably be more popular than ever this year and Toc H can do a tremendous lot in this direction. Not only in Scout camps, but in camps run for youngsters who are not Scouts—and there are hundreds of these boys—camps for youths. Last year Cheltenham Branch and Group, together with the L.W.H., took 400 kiddies to the sea for a day who had never seen it before.

Then we shall have our own week-end camps for training purposes. Talks round a camp fire, under the stars, appeal far more than sitting on a hard floor with sundry draughts as company. There is a point perhaps which might be appropriately mentioned in regard to camping and that is litter. In Scout camps it is the rule to leave a camp site in the same condition as on arrival. This rule should apply to all camps. Just one other point. We want some new songs for camp fires. Most of the songs which we "sing" are of ancient history. Some are good, some indifferent, quite a number require decent burial.

Ere we go into print again, we shall hope to have an Area Padre. The Area has been a long time without one and his coming will be all the more welcome.

At the first meeting of the Area Executive on February 13 two important decisions were made: first, that Bristol should be the Headquarters of the Western Area, and second, that Cinderford should be promoted to Group status.

THE FAMILY OVERSEAS

Africa

EASTERN PROVINCE. The Eastern Province Guard of the Lamp present an interesting and constructive report. Here is what they say about the age of members : " The average age for the Eastern Province is 34 and this is undoubtedly too high. Strenuous efforts must be made to attract the youngsters from 18 to 21 and inoculate them with the Toc H germ. We would emphasise that it is the presence of mere juniors and not the absence of seniors that is wanted." Nevertheless, Eastern Province have been proving their metal, and Port Elizabeth now organise a monthly " Joy Fund Picnic " where one can see 40 odd ragged kiddies enjoying a merry outing in a fine open space on the beach, with lemonade and buns to help on the fun. A conscientious work party functions regularly, and bookcases for the hospital library, scout cupboards and valuable seating for the den testify to its efforts.

NATAL. Ixopo have started boy scouts and also devoted much of their energy to spreading the Toc H idea. Uvongo Beach, their offspring, is working up to be a live unit, and all this part of the coast is showing much enthusiasm, while Harding should soon provide a Group.

At the great Birthday Festival at Johannesburg, Dean Palmer, in a short talk, told of what he had seen of Toc H in England. All Hallows especially had struck him, the homeliness and beauty of the Coeur-de-Lion Chapel with its ever-burning lamp and calm recumbent figure. He said : " I do want you members here to-night to make All Souls Chapel peculiarly your own. I want you to make it for the people of South Africa something that All Hallows is becoming to the people of England."

RHODESIA. Umtali have started the New Year with many good resolutions, especially over the Building Fund, and their ideas have grown more ambitious with time. They aim at a profit of between £100 and £150 from An Olde English Faire to be held in April, and would welcome any suggestions from home units who have already plunged into such problems (Secretary, P.O. Box 45). They feel, too, that a change of Executive is essential to the well-being of any Branch, new ideas, fresh store of initiative and above all a variation in voices all making for good, and they are acting accordingly, bringing new blood into official positions.

Asia

INDIA. Madras, following up that promising subject of Toc H " The Seven Seas," has thrown its Headquarters especially open to all Seafarers, who are welcomed to dinner and billiards and friendship. They are being reached also by the River Chaplain at the Seamen's Mission and by the Marksmen who get in touch with the marines there. It seems also likely that a Seamen's Institute, with Toc H help both in planning or running, will soon come into being.

The new Grope at Calcutta, started since the All-India Birthday to cope with the subsequent rush, has recently got down to a real corporate job. On Sunday, February 2, they first opened their Street Boys' Open Air Club, an innovation to Calcutta. This is the third of its kind that Toc H has more or less made itself responsible for, and promises to be a great show. One of the helpers says that there can't be more thoroughly street-boyish street-boys anywhere else in the world.

CEYLON. On Saturday, January 31, Colombo, Ceylon, mustered together eight cars and arranged a most enjoyable motor-run for 25 men of the submarines *Persens* and *Poseidon*. They also made themselves responsible, a week later, for the most happy and exciting Sports meeting of the Juvenile Offenders' Club. The Deaf and Dumb School, some twelve miles from Colombo, is almost the biggest job, though the Slave Island Working Boys' Club with its average nightly attendance of 20 runs it close. At the former Toc H serves on the Committee and does the books, superintends the band, games, carpentry, tailoring and pottery Departments, arranges

all costing and marketing of the Schools' manufactures and at odd times acts as Consulting Engineer, runs stalls at local Bazaars in aid of the School and does many other warming bits of work, not forgetting Cinema shows and fireworks for the children.

MALAY. The Malayan Branch have been busy during these last months taking stock of their position and reorganising. As a result the *Little Journal* makes its welcome appearance again, and the Wings are to have greater independence. The heaviest difficulty in the peninsula is to bind together strongly those very many scattered members on plantations and mines, who can so rarely come into personal contact with the fellowship of the Branch. It is a hard job, and Malay is to set about it again in earnest.

SUEZ. The small yet strategic outpost of Suez seems on the way to become an outpost also of Toc H. On January 16 five members went across from Cairo, in answer to the interest that had already been shown, and talked on Toc H. Fifteen men attended the meeting, and decided at once to start a Group. There will be much work for them to do there, especially among the sick men who come ashore and have at present no one to visit them in hospital, and also during the short stays of passing ships. Theirs will be no easy job, but a valuable one—good luck to them.

Australia

NEW SOUTH WALES. The Group at Stockton, which stands at a zd. ferry distance across the river from the landing quays at Sydney, is laying itself out to welcome visitors and especially seafaring men, two of whom are now working with them. Owing to unemployment and transfers, they, like many other Australian units, have members constantly moving to and fro just at the present time. Their jobs, however, are strongly supported and include helping the Committee to give out goods at the Unemployment Relief Depot on two days a week, and caring for the 39 trees of the Avenue of the Soldiers' Monument, each one of which represents a local Elder Brother.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA. Starting late on Christmas Eve, 250 members of Toc H visited many homes in Adelaide and the suburbs, leaving presents and cheer behind them to brighten little ones whose chances of a merry Christmas would otherwise have been slight. Approximately 2,000 children were visited before the work was finished at about 10 o'clock on Christmas morning. A similar distribution had been made before, but this year, with the additional help of surplus funds made available from the *Adelaide Advertiser* appeal, its scope was enormously increased. Preparations had been under way for weeks, and lists of families compiled from various sources, to be visited by 75 cars loaded with presents and 45 versions of Father Christmas.

VICTORIA. Towards the end of last year it was not at all a difficult thing to realise that in many homes in Melbourne Christmas was likely to be anything but a season of joy. Accordingly it was determined to hold a grand finale to the relief work that had been carried on since the end of May. The funds available were limited, but a concert raised £242 and donations brought another £100 while the broadcasting station helped with quantities of toys. The work of distributing supplies was carried out by 60 cars to 762 families, including 3,600 children. The joy of the recipients made all the work well worth while, and many fast friends were found.

New Zealand

In the tremendous earthquake catastrophe which stunned a whole region, Toc H Wellington has been urgently under orders all the time. One member has been acting as orderly clerk at the Napier Field Hospital, another as despatch-rider at Nelson Park Dressing Station, a third as switchboard-clerk at the same place, and many others as helpers of one sort and another in connection with Red Cross and other institutions. They have been much too busy to prepare or send a full report, but there is no doubt that this crisis of suffering and ruin has found Toc H in New Zealand straining all its energies to ease the corporate distress.

A few notes appeared last month on the Toc H Schools Camp. This was held at Resolution Bay for 35 boys, 19 from Orphanages and 16 from Wellington and Hutt Valley Secondary Schools. The boys were divided into four huts known as "Marks," each with its "Warden," and each having a rota for helpers with the meals—four hours "watch" usually for each. Games, walks, fishing expeditions, hare and hounds, cherry-picking excursions and swimming, diving and boating sports were the order of the day after duties were over, while in the evening meetings were held in the fine dining-hall which has just been built. Each Sunday a Communion and an ordinary Service were held. Toc H holds the camp on the property of Sir Heaton Rhodes, one of the Vice-Presidents of the Christchurch Branch, who has lately given a three years' lease of the ground, free of all charges, to Toc H.

North America

CANADA. Sherbrooke Group (Quebec) have been going steadily forward with a membership of about twenty, and they took part in the Area Conference at Montreal in November, and the Chain of Light in December, besides their regular and vitally varied Meetings. Jobs in Canada are varied and enthusiastically done—Kelowna run a Boys' Club attended every evening by thirty to thirty-five boys; Loverna have planted trees down the village street and regularly tend them; while Nelson, seeing that the Salvation Army hut which supplied food to 100 unemployed had no sanitary arrangements, collected \$80 and installed a complete system, plumbing and all. St. James, Manitoba Branch, are reorganising their Street v. Street Baseball League, which brings enjoyment and fellowship to many city youngsters, and they have made a young helpers' league of their many probationers, who are working hard for the Branch.

U.S.A. Manhattan write to say that they are gaining a deeper understanding of Toc H and showing more signs of life than the business world of New York. Things are shaping almost miraculously towards there being a real house and home for the Ship Boys' Club and Toc H New York. Baltimore have been furnishing motor service to the Family Welfare workers, making friends with offenders in the Juvenile Court, and accumulating a store of clothing and canned foods against the distress of the winter. They again distributed Christmas cards to 800 patients in local hospitals, sang in one of the biggest on Christmas Eve where they planted a great Christmas tree for those patients in the interior wards who cannot see the brightness of the outer world.

South America

CHILE. Valparaiso went far to prove the inter-denominationalism of Toc H and to gather friends in different sects by planning a ball on the R.M.S. *Orbita* to raise funds for the local C. of E., Roman Catholic, Presbyterian Churches. The latter, though very friendly and appreciative, forwent its share. All these churches do splendid work in the town. Other shows organised by the Branch brought in much valuable help for the British and American Hospital, the Benevolent Fund, St. Dunstons, and a Chilean charity, *El Sanatorio Maritimo*.

Santiago have divided themselves up into four teams, each under a Team leader—the Hospital Team, *Casa de Orates* (Asylum) Team, *Hermanitas de los Pobres* (Old People's Home) Team, and Salvation Army Team. All do good work, and the last perhaps the hardest of all.

The Concepcion Group, formed a year ago, is going strong and has now 10 initiated members. One of their regular jobs is in connection with a poor boys' club, which is visited by members each week and a squad of "teachers" who coach the boys in scholastic subjects. On January 14 they took 30 of the boys for an all-day picnic at San Pedro Lake, a short train journey away.

Both Antofagasta and Iquique Groups have suffered as a result of the acute nitrate crisis, having lost many members and received no new blood. Yet stalwarts in both places are keeping things vitally alive, and there were recently four initiations at Iquique.